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Memoirs of
Ernest II, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha

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PRINCE ALBERT

IN HIS TWENTIETH YEAR.

MEMOIRS OF ERNEST II

Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha

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WITH PORTRAIT OF PRINCE ALBERT

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PREFACE

r has often been complained in earlier times, that in ne of the most important branches of literature, of hich English and Frenchmen were complete masters -in historical-political memoirs—much less has een done by us Germans. In these days the most aried subjects are comprised under the name of Iemoirs: sometimes collections of events in private fe and letters, sometimes publications of public cor- espondence and diplomatic documents. Also political ogmas, philosophical observations, confessions of eautiful minds, are not seldom clothed in this form. Everywhere, where revelations of a like kind are made luring the course of a single human life, or presented n a certain chronological order, it is thought necessary o dub them Memoirs. Gœthe thought otherwise of is Memoirs, which he wished to have recognised in he character of a well-written work of art, all the nore, as, in spite of the truth of the contents, he did ot give it a title which might prevent one from believing it to be of a poetical nature.

It should be easier to find this ideal form for the

representation of personal reminiscences, where the inner life of a human being is more artistically portrayed by its means, than when one attempts to reproduce the political events of a man's life and the relations of the former to the latter. I had at first intended to clothe my recollections also in a purely personal form; but I perceived during the course of the work that the rate of political events since the time of my assuming the reins of government had gained so overpowering an influence over the whole history of my life, that it was hardly possible at any point to abstain from continually considering the coherent modern state development, more particularly that of Germany.

In consequence of my continual participation in German politics, my recollections have quite unintentionally assumed the character of an uninterrupted representation of the events of the past decades; I have even been often a chance witness of great and decisive affairs. When I looked back to all I had gone through I involuntarily formed a mental picture of the whole epoch. And thus this work, which I am now publishing, has assumed the character of a description which at times does not touch upon my individual life.

I openly express my conviction, that, in our busy times, when the success of a thing is only judged by outward appearances, the man of action must now, more than ever, feel the necessity of preventing his views of political life and his part therein from being entirely lost sight of.

In their results, politics are always the product of great strength. Just as great Generals retain in their memory the clear consciousness of the co-operation of thousands, so do the strongest and most farseeing statesmen best know, how little it was a single will alone which expressed itself in the great development. In the history read by our descendants, only the man who has taken care that written information of his struggles exist, can hope with any certainty to have a place.

This conviction has helped me to overcome the reflection that it always seemed undesirable to my German State contemporaries—apart from a great, incomparable exception in the past—to encroach personally upon this kind of historical literature. And yet such a step is particularly justified now-a-days, when one casts a glance over many books of contemporary history.

When reading memoirs and descriptions of the past ten years, I was sometimes surprised to find personages of whom I had a distinct recollection as being men whom we had to thank as the initiators of certain events, either very insufficiently mentioned, or not at all. Here and there it may have been owing to the desire not to expose the actions of reigning persons to unavoidable criticism at such an early date. Nevertheless, such a manner of observation and handling must needs give rise to considerable reflection.

The constitutional principle is silent concerning the

actions of the crown from reverence, and history sometimes passes over the wearers of crowns in silence from principle. Thus it cannot fail that one is not seldom reminded of the great importance of Mr Nemo in the narratives and traditions of the present; and this nobody appears chiefly in the epos of most recent history, when Princes and Regents have had a personal part to play.

The cause, as well as the effect, of such historical-political representations are fresh in my memory. The impulsive forces of development remain unmentioned and unknown; and because, in the circles in which they are found, there rules a great and universal shrinking from making public use of written words, a *fable convenue* can spread itself indefatigably over important moments in our time also.

On the other hand, few of the dissuasions which are usually tried, are tried at the right time, with regard to their own pre-eminence through the testimony of the Press. I cannot make up my mind to let my right perish, to describe things as I myself have seen, felt and helped to bring them about. The opportunity has been continually offered me during the past half century, to take my place in the vanguard; I have had much experience, I have closely observed events, and no one really acquainted with the times can wish to cast a doubt on my modest share in the shaping of our Fatherland.

This work, which is now to be made public, I have written with an amount of care, reflection, and I

may say, critical nicety, of which not many of the large number of like publications can boast.

I was continually occupied for nearly ten years in making my description of things as consistent as possible with the truth, without giving anyone reason to feel injured. I have often made up my mind rather to neglect the form of my narrative in order to make the important contents more certain. Nor have I been willing, like many other narrators, to rely upon my good memory alone; I have, on the contrary, most carefully compared my recollections with all the documents at my disposal.

Neither will I speak of the fruit of most personal, I might say most private, reminiscences, which have helped me in this work. My Memoirs are based upon a comprehensive investigation and use of rich mines of material. My collection of documents for the history of the times is greatly increased by the uncommonly voluminous correspondence which flowed into my house. The public archives have also contributed valuable help; and for the history of my personal adventures, I have the diaries which have been kept since my earliest youth, as a leading line. I was aided by friends and officials with copies of original deeds.

Armed with such a fund of material, I may say that I was in a better position to settle and hand down facts than many others of my contemporaries. Under these circumstances I could set down, according to rule, what I thought of things and how I judged

them. I have everywhere striven to place the reader in the very midst of the movements of former times.

I have lived through the mighty period of the struggle for the national possessions; I have never co-operated otherwise than with pleasure and devotion, always keeping in sight the great results of which the generation to which I belong may now thankfully boast. Of course, no single man, and perhaps still less any single party, will claim the credit of having always striven in the right direction to reach the goal of our present development.

Nevertheless, the purely neutral interest which is certain to gain friends for my portrayal, will allow no room for mere malevolence; I think I may be certain that my work will serve, even after the lapse of many years, as a source of information concerning our remarkable epoch.

As regards the description of the early years of my life—somewhere near the time of the Oriental development—I must not omit to refer the reader generally to the books written by the Queen of England about my brother. The affectionate relations which existed between me and my brother would have rendered it impossible for me to refer to a single passage in those well-known works. For not only brotherly love, but a uniformity of political convictions and work bound us inseparably together.

May this work, therefore, written by an eye-witness and fellow-worker to the best of his knowledge, furnish the minds of contemporary and future friends

of the history of a great epoch of our national development with a closer understanding of the same; but for the narrator himself may it win and keep warm hearty appreciation.

E. D. OF S.

Memoirs of Duke Ernest of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha

CHAPTER I

EARLY LEGEND OF THE COBURG FAMILY.—ITS REAL HISTORY.—FALL OF ERNESTINE BRANCH.—FRANZ JOSIAS ENFORCES PRIMOGENITURE.—THE MARSHAL'S LETTER AS TO THE SUCCESSION.—ACCESSION OF THE DUKE'S FATHER.—STATE OF THE HOUSE OF COBURG.—TREATY OF 4TH MAY, 1805.—KING LEOPOLD'S VIEW OF THE SITUATION.—ANECDOTE OF FREDERICK WILLIAM III.—LETTERS TO FREDERICK JOSIAS.—THE DUKE GAINS LICHTENBERG; ENTERS THE RHINE CONFEDERACY.—HIS MARRIAGE.—BIRTH OF THE PRINCES ERNEST AND ALBERT.—SANGUINE ANTICIPATIONS.—THE DUCHESS LOUISE DIES.—THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF LEININGEN.—PARENTAL INFLUENCE OF THE DUKE—A SPARTAN CODE.—EARLY INSTRUCTORS.—GREEK NEGLECTED FOR SCIENCE.—FLORSCHUETZ.—CONFIRMATION OF THE YOUNG PRINCES.—LETTER FROM KING LEOPOLD.—PRINCE ERNEST'S REPLY.

THERE is perhaps no second event in the history of the Saxon Land and Royal Family, which has been so often and so willingly related in my Thuringian home, rich as it is in traditions, as the legendary abduction of the Princes and the romantic crime of the Chevalier Kunz von Kaufungen.

Both political and non-political moralists discovered in this national tradition a rich supply of matter for good precepts, and countless picture books have from the earliest times depicted the hard fate of the two young Princes Ernest and Albert, who have become the ancestors of two families which have taken a prominent position in German history. As late

as the year 1822, a fine monument was unveiled on the Saxon Fürstenberg, by which the memory of the two founders of the Houses of Ernest and Albert was once more made green.

That I and my younger brother bore the names of the stolen sons of Frederick the Gentle, in exactly the same order and with almost exactly the same difference in age, seemed to our narrow family circle a circumstance fitted to furnish grandmothers and relations with material for reflection and with many pleasant hopes for our future.

The charcoal-burner Georg Schmidt, the Abbé Ciborius, the capture of the Chevalier Kunz and the servant Schweinitz, the mortal danger of Prince Ernest in the devil's cleft, the good-natured woodmen in the forest, the worthy upper-bailiff Frederick von Schönburg, and, finally, the punishment and death of the criminal, in fact the whole story, often repeated, afforded us children, as well as the relaters, an inexhaustible source of interest. In this way a picture of their own desires and struggles was perhaps presented to future leaders of the nation in the children's rooms of old Germany, moved by fancy and energy, through the similarity of names and places and the unchangeability of the natural features of their country.

The first years of my childhood, when the mighty Emperor of the French was known to be banished to the solitude of a rocky island, were an epoch in the intellectual life of the German nation, in which numberless circles, turning from the present, buried themselves with passionate ardour in the bygone times of monks and cavaliers. Thus it happened that the youngest branches of the Ernest Coburg family grew up with the names and amidst the memories of a past and gone age of romance which they considered exceedingly fascinating, and that hardly anyone wrote or spoke of me and my brother without recalling the words of my grandmother, that her boys bore exactly the same names as the sons of the Elector Frederick, who were stolen by Kunz von Kaufungen.

The real history of the Saxon House was not, however, as is known, so pleasant as the historical myths of the ancient Wettins, and the great schism in our House became for it a

source of numerous recollections of misfortunes. Would not the great Elector, to whom the German nation owe their freedom of creed, have been the fittest man to lead the Empire into new ways and solidify his house, when the whole Wettins land lay in his hand? His divided possession did not give him the courage to accept the offered crown which fell to Charles V. Then followed the downfall of the Ernestine branch, and ever widening divisions amongst the rest.

A still greater fall, in relation to Coburg-Saalfeld, was obviated by my great-grandfather Franz Josias in 1822, by means of a family law, which firmly established the absolute right of primogeniture. The numberless princes of the house were thus thrown on their own resources and made dependent on their gains. My great-grandfather's brothers were all forced to enter foreign service, and have made our name known throughout all Europe. The youngest of them outlived the Romish German Empire for ten years as Field-Marshal. He was still living when my father began to reign, and helped him with faithful adherence to the family to bear the hard times of the Rhine Confederacy and the Napoleonic dominion. Characteristic of his cares is a letter, which the good old Marshal addressed to the Ministry on the death of my grandfather, and which reveals the disturbed state of the affairs of even my small home in the year 1806:

'RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—

'VERY HIGHLY HONOURED LORD MINISTER,—As it has pleased God to call His Grace my nephew, the reigning Lord Duke, out of this world, and I cannot believe that the Patent issued by His Majesty the French Emperor excludes every reigning Lord of the country from assuming the reins of power, the Lord Hereditary Prince as little as His Highness the present Prince Ferdinand, and as Prince Leopold has not yet attained his majority, I therefore wish to inquire of Your Excellency if full permission has been given the Lord Hereditary Prince to take into his hands the reins of Government? If this is not the case, I should indisputably have to undertake the control of affairs myself until the attainment

of majority of either one or the other of my Lord nephews! I remain, with the highest respect, your Excellency's obedient servant

'FR. JOSIAS PRINCE OF SAXE-COBURG.

'*Coburg, 9th Dec.* 1806.'

It was not found necessary to accept the proffered services, as my father himself came forward and assumed the government.

Old Frederick Josias, to whose warlike deeds my uncle, King Leopold of Belgium, through von Witzleben, raised a beautiful literary monument, wrote down in his diary with painful elaborateness, every occurrence of moment which took place up to the time of his death. The book, with its simple details, is not important enough to be used here, but many pages as well as other daily notes, show how hard and oppressive it was to a German to be forced to bear the French dominion. The old conqueror of the Turks had, however, the satisfaction of outliving the tyrant's fall. He died on the 5th of February 1815, almost at the moment when Napoleon, flying from Elba, reached the coast of France. My father had just returned home from the Congress of Vienna, the assembly which had been looked to with so little hope of success as a healer of the many ills of former years The later King Leopold affirmed in his notes, that my father had equally embittered the Prussian King and his statesmen by his partizanship in the Saxon question, and had nearly been compelled to forego every advantage. The slight enlargement of territory on the Rhine with the chief town of St Wendel, which Prussia did not like as a limit and even at last would not acknowledge as accepted in the agreement, was obtained by Prince Leopold only with the greatest effort.

In order, however, to appreciate all the difficulties which beset my father at this date, it is necessary to recall the state of the House of Coburg at that time. The complete union of Coburg-Saalfeld first took place through a treaty signed on the 4th of May 1805. Up to that time the Coburgers only participated in the Saalfeld part of the country, the other

part of which belonged to Saxe-Altenburg, that is, to the Duke of Gotha, who at the same time enjoyed the right of sovereignty over the Saalfeld territory. Through a treaty in 1805 Saalfeld, with the Gotha portion of the domain of Themar, was given over to Coburg, and Coburg surrendered Roemhild to Gotha, thus equalising the two domains to a great extent. Thus my father's possessions included the domains of Coburg and Themar, and, of the Saalfeld territory, the domains of Saalfeld and Graefenthal-Probstzella, making altogether 17¾ square miles with 57,266 inhabitants, according to a census of the year 1812. As King Leopold has already related in his Memorial,* the fortune of my ancestors was greatly lessened by mishandling of every description. The national want had reached its crisis through the French war. The year 1806 found my father with the army of the allied Prussians and Russians, and on the death of my grandfather, Franz Friedrich Anton, on the 9th of December 1806, the French treated Coburg as a rich booty. Coburg was by no means unknown to the French, and had earned their hatred in the years of the Revolution, because French emigrants had settled there after the 1st of November 1792. Coburg had in consequence, and perhaps more than it deserved, gained the reputation of a reactionary and legitimate nest, where the French governor and intendant might with particular satisfaction give free vent to his enmity.

Only with great trouble was my father able to get his rights admitted and recover his dukedom under the conditions made on his entrance into the Rhine Confederacy. But he naturally had no part in the favours and elevation of rank attained by the other Princes belonging to the Rhine Confederacy, a deprivation which his sons and grandsons may set down to his credit.

Six long years were spent in quiet retirement, devoted to the zealous restoration of the little dominion's pecuniary pro-

* Mention is made here once for all of this Memorial, which may be found in Grey's *Early Years*, as a reference book for the older history and personal matters. German edition: The Youthful Years of Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, pp. 309-335. For the supplement to these Memoirs see: *Deutsche Revue*, for June 1884: 'King Leopold as a critic.'

sperity; general politics had to be considered a sealed book, not to be touched by a Prince of the Rhine Confederacy without stirring the Emperor's anger. My father was forced to be all the more careful, as the relations of his two brothers with Austria and Russia were well known to Napoleon, and, as King Leopold relates, he was even made responsible for the latter's not having entered the French service. Not until on the first of January 1813—to quote King Leopold's own words,—was Germany happier than she had been for a long time.

How quickly and decidedly my father and his brothers took their place in military and political affairs, will be but briefly mentioned here, as my uncle has already told the whole story so clearly with all the modesty of his rare character. It was only natural that the occurrence during the war of liberation and the part taken by the father and uncle, should furnish an inexhaustible supply of food for conversation in ours as in every family, in the days of my childhood and youth. Nowadays, when the world is no less inclined to romance and fables than it was formerly, one must call up a vivid mental picture of the soldier comrades in 1813, in order to realise what an enormous influence these recollections of hot fighting and hard days had over the thoughts and feelings of youth, and how every nerve quivered when father or uncle, both excellent relaters, told the eagerly listening boys of what they had seen and gone through. I might repeat an abundance of anecdotes word for word, which King Leopold, in particularly cheerful moments, was always ready to relate of the year 1813.

Some of them were so characteristic of many of the chief persons who took part in the great drama, that it would be a pity if they were entirely forgotten, for it is undeniable that history, which has a leaning towards completely personifying great deeds, does not always offer up sacrifice on the altars of rightly chosen gods.

Immediately after the battle of Kulm, King Leopold, then commander of a Russian brigade of Horse Guards, retired into Teplitz. He found the town overflowing with troops, and, in order to furnish quarters for himself and his staff, nothing

remained to him except to go to the Clary Palace, where the Emperor Francis had already taken up his quarters. As the Prince entered the house to ask the Emperor if a portion of the apartments could be vacated for the tired officers, he found him taking part in a trio, in the most comfortable frame of mind, but not more cheerful than he had been during the thundering of the cannon of Kulm, when he had given himself up to the gratification of his passion for music. The Emperor at once expressed himself willing to grant the desired request, adding with immovable calm, 'Oh, yes, willingly, we can fiddle below just as well.' So he continued to fiddle gaily on the first floor.

The King was fond of relating another amusing intermezzo of the battle of Leipzig. He had been sent to King Frederick William III, in order to inform him of some arrangement or other.

Notwithstanding the importance of his commission, Prince Leopold was not admitted, and he found, besides, Gneisenau was in the same painful position, awaiting the signature of a royal order. But the King did not appear, and sent no commands. They became more pressing, and sent a request through the officer on service that something might be decided upon. At length Frederick William himself appears, in an angry frame of mind, and explains that hours ago he had sent to the Emperor Alexander to inquire if he should appear in Russian or Prussian uniform on the day of battle, and he was astonished that Prince Leopold had brought no decisive message on the subject. The latter now venturing upon a modest remonstrance, the King broke out wrathfully, 'First of all, I must know what uniform I am to wear, for I certainly shall not be able to go on the march without trousers!'

Happily the longed-for news at length arrived, and Frederick William in his turn, signed the orders. Graver and more thrilling were the uncle's tales when he spoke of Kulm, Brienne and Paris, which he entered on the 31st of March with the Russian cavalry, being present at that never to be forgotten moment, which has since then been often enough depicted, and the remembrance of which fell like a fruitful

seed on the minds of the rising generation. The letters written during these years of Europe's regeneration to the old Prince Frederick Josias are of some historical interest. They reveal my uncle's character and mode of thought, which the youth of to-day, even by paying the greatest attention to those parts of history which have rightly been consecrated to him, have not really learned to know.

'*Carlsbad*, 12*th July* 1813.

'I have all this while deprived myself of the pleasure of writing to you, because both opportunity and matter were often awanting, and most of all the leisure to do so, as you yourself will remember is so often the case in time of war. Up to the present I have had the good luck to escape all dangers, and can be thankful to God for it, for they have been plentiful enough. The present quiet after so many fatigues has been of great benefit. It would have given me great pleasure to see Ferdinand and Mensdorf here, besides my dear Ernest, and their letters lead us to hope that they will come. It would seem, however, as if their presence here were almost unnecessary, for according to all appearances an unsatisfactory peace seems to be preferred by the country to war, although if all would hold together, proposals would be most favourable. I leave Ernest to tell you the political news, as well as the little which concerns myself, as it might be too voluminous in writing, and put you to inconvenience. When I say good-bye to Ernest, which I shall soon do, I shall go to Prague, where I shall perhaps remain two days during the Congress, in order to furnish information concerning the peace, and give a few new impressions.

'Then I shall return to Peterswaldau near Reichenbach in Silesia, where the Emperor has his headquarters, and after that to the heavy cavalry at Ossig, a village near Liegnitz.'

'*Paris*, 2*nd June* 1814.

'It is impossible for me to leave Paris without recommending myself to your gracious thoughts. To have spent two months in garrison in a city which during the past twenty

years has posed as the capital of the world, and to enter it as victors after such brilliant engagements as those of Fère Champenoise and Paris itself, is an event which cannot be forgotten. Our stay here has been very pleasant, particularly the latter part. My brothers have contributed much to our pleasure. Ferdinand lived with me, and Ernest farther off; also good Mensdorf, who is still very sad at the loss of his son, has visited me very often. Our occupation gives us a great deal to do, and I hope that things will take a happier turn than at first appeared. As the Emperor has had the kindness to allow me to follow him to England, I shall seize this favourable opportunity of seeing that interesting country, which must at this moment present a very brilliant appearance, owing to the many celebrations which are to take place.

'The Emperor of Austria left early this morning for Vienna, and the Russian Emperor for London, but he will stop for several days at Boulogne, in order to inspect the public institutions, I shall join him there.

'Heaven grant that a lasting peace may be the result of so many sacrifices.

'I greatly fear that there will be a civil war in France. The masses are too heterogeneous for it to do them any good, and I pity the poor Bourbons, who will have to bear many a hard thrust in order to keep their seat on the throne; I advise them to be severe, a few heads—falling—will help a great deal.

'I do not think that the stay in England will be lengthy. I hope to be expected in Coburg by my gracious uncle by the end of July or the beginning of August, and look forward with pleasure to that happy moment.

'*P.S.*—His Majesty the Emperor Franz has had the graciousness to present me with the Theresa Cross, for services rendered on the fields of Kulm and Fère Champenoise.'

Vienna, 8th November 1814.

'As General Tettenborn is very wisely passing through Coburg on his journey, I seize with great eagerness this

opportunity of assuring my most gracious uncle of my respect. I wished to do it earlier, but had so much writing and business to see to, that I was obliged to postpone it from day to day.

'Things have not gone so quickly with the good Congress as one might have expected, and I risked having to lengthen my stay in Coburg to a considerable extent. The supposed preparative business was not, as I have already said, transacted at all, as everything had first to be gone over and settled. Things went here just as they do with private persons who hesitate long before they can decide upon looking up an unpleasant affair.

'None of the great Powers would handle the unpleasant questions with prompt earnestness, they tried to temporize, hoping that the condition of things would assume a better aspect, which, however, was not the case to my knowledge. This is the reason why the Congress had to be delayed until the 1st of November, and even now they are trying to gain more time, with this object in view. The Congress, as such, is embarrassing to the Great Powers, and principally to Russia, Austria and Prussia, because such an assembly of the whole of the European Powers naturally must result in consideration being given not only to the interests of these Great Powers, but to the well-being and equilibrium of all Europe as well, which makes an important difference. France makes the most noise, as was to be expected all along, and demands to remain in possession of Saxony, whilst Russia on the other hand, is to give up a large piece of Poland to Prussia, in order to supply the population formerly guaranteed to her. England also upholds this claim more or less, which is, indeed, very important for the proper maintenance of equilibrium.

'The whole matter is really confined to this one point. Russia will not give up the dukedom of Warsaw, and Prussia wants Saxony in consequence; whereas the other Powers insist upon Russia giving Prussia the greater portion of Warsaw, and saving Saxony. If they all continue thus to insist upon having their own way, the Congress will have

been useless, and an early, if not an immediate, war is to be feared, which would be the most unhappy of all things, as the confusion which would thus arise is not to be conceived of.

'Providence which heretofore has ordered all for the best, will not, it is to be hoped, leave its beautiful work unfinished and allow war and destruction to spread once more over poor, sorely plagued Europe.

'Until these great questions are settled, there is desperately little to be said about our own hopes and views for the future, yet I hope for something, even if it be but a little, but the Congress must not break up, otherwise our fate is decided, and we shall obtain nothing.

'The sovereigns are very gay, dancing, hunting, and so forth, their journey to Ofen has amused them right well. Entertainments of all sorts were given them there, and the Hungarian nationality appeared remarkable to them. A journey to some other spot will soon be taken; I hear that the chief sovereigns are going to Graz, and that they seem to have some desire to visit Trieste and perhaps even Venice; the gracious lords seem to have taken such a fancy to travelling in their old age as to be quite unable to stop. They say, too, that the Austrian Emperor has promised to go to Petersburg in May, when there will naturally be a great deal going on.

'The noble guests cost the Court here an unheard of sum of money. It is affirmed that it amounts to no less than 60,000 florins daily, and this does not strike me as being too much when one remembers the immense number of people who make up the royal suites; several hundred persons sit down daily at the Marshal's table alone, moreover, all the servants are liberally fed.

'The Court is more splendid than I had ever thought it could be, and the former French one cannot be compared with it. I have had the pleasure of having the Grand-Duke here, but, unfortunately, he was obliged to leave on Tuesday the 8th, and return to Warsaw; he charged me to present his compliments to my gracious uncle, and remembers with great pleasure the few days he passed with us in Coburg last

year. He has exercised his regiment, which is stationed here, several times, and invariably to his entire satisfaction. His intention was to take me to Warsaw with him, but I preferred remaining here.

'As I am forced to close this letter, which must go at once, I beg my gracious uncle to remember me to aunt Caroline, and to keep in mind the unchangeable love and veneration with which I shall always remain, etc.'

'*Vienna, 20th December* 1814.

'As the happy day is almost at hand on which you were presented to the world, I hasten to lay my heartfelt and respectful congratulations at your feet; may just Providence protect for long years to come the life of an uncle so beloved, and so universally esteemed.

'I had greatly hoped and wished to be able to say all this verbally on my beloved and gracious uncle's birthday, but Heaven has ordered it otherwise, and prolonged this Congress even longer than I had at first expected. Although I suspected it would last rather long, yet I had thought that more good-will and rectitude would be shown than has as yet been the case.

'Affairs are in a cruel state of stagnation, and I fear war, if things continue thus, although every visible advantage demands peace. In this important moment one must lean upon Providence even more than ever, the Providence which, although it does not appear so, will certainly direct everything for the best; for the human mind is at times unable to understand, in its misery and despair, why matters, which are so easy to smooth over, are deliberately complicated by higher hands. The past Advent has drawn a line through the list of entertainments and amusements here, and there were none at all in the Catholic families; on the other hand, many were given by Russians, Razumoffsky, for instance, and by English families.

'The Russian Emperor's birthday will take place in a few days, and will be celebrated in many ways, amongst others by a Court show from which I shall unfortunately be absent.

It is thought that some of the smaller kings will then be able to leave, such as those of Würtemberg and Bavaria.

'We have had several weeks of the most beautiful weather that one can imagine, and it often seems as if the spring had arrived, the sun shines so warmly. For some time past one has been unable to wear an overcoat, as it is much too warm, and on the Bastion, where the fashionable world promenades, there is a daily concourse as if it were a masquerade. If the weather is equally favourable at home, my gracious uncle will have been able to have several good days' hunting.

'Nothing is said of the departure of the great sovereigns, and this is deemed a proof that the business is not yet near its end.

'But I will no longer weary my most gracious uncle with my writing, especially as news is scarce. If God will, I shall soon have the happiness of talking with my gracious uncle, and wish to return my most respectful thanks for the two letters.'

From these letters it will be seen that the princely races of Germany did not look upon the war of liberation exactly in the light of a national regeneration, as was done later. Even in the principal persons of the allied armies it was only a strongly developed longing for the peace of nations, and a love for the old legitimate order, and even the most intellectual and important amongst them, such as King Leopold, looked upon the great campaign of Paris, as hardly more than a mighty international undertaking against the predominance of France. This great epoch of our national history appeared first to the sons of those brave fighters in the light of a national opinion, and the following generation first coined the historical medal of the so-called war of liberation in their inner consciousness.

Neither in Prussian nor in other German families existed a thought which could have had the slightest resemblance to that which, during my life, has been adopted as the fruit of reflection on the national possibilities and Germany's form of constitution under Prussia's leadership. Yes, I think I may

with full right lay claim to a reward for my contemporaries and the existing generation, which, through pragmatic hastiness on the part of history, has been designated as a barren inheritance.

Many great and good men as there were amongst the princes, commanders and statesmen, in the war of liberation everyone who had any social intercourse with them in youthful days must admit that their national and political views embraced an entirely, incomparably different point of view. What Germany now is, that is, according to the fundamental notion—abstractly from all special questions on which one might have different opinions,—she has undoubtedly become through work done in the present period; I have no hesitation in the beginning of this *résumé* of my life, in inserting a speech made by the Emperor William, which will bear decisively upon the question. It was in Versailles, where the then assembled princes had congregated around the Emperor just before the beginning of the world-renowned ceremony. As he greeted me, he distinctly spoke the following words: 'I do not forget that you are also deserving of thanks for your efforts on behalf of the chief object for which we are here to-day.'

In this way he proved in the most personal manner, as may easily happen in moments of overpowering feelings, the fact that the work of unity would never have been completed if a number of true-minded men had not been piling up the stones for the masonry during half their lives. In the year 1815, on the other hand, it would certainly have been looked upon in most of the families of Germany as something very astounding if anyone had prophesied that fifty years later, the sons of those princes would vote the German Empire to Prussia's King with the most heartfelt singlemindedness. Even my father would hardly have realised the divergence in the stream of time if he could have heard the words which William I uttered to me in that decisive moment, and at no point of German development can one better see the great change in the spirit of politics than in relation to Prussia's position in the Germany of to-day.

In 1815, only after long negotiations and solely through the help of the Emperor Alexander, my father obtained possession of Lichtenberg on the Rhine. The raising of the little twelve mile square territory to a dukedom met with Prussia's opposition, so that it seemed as if my father had staked every advantage of his ducal possession when, one of the first princes to join the Rhine Confederacy, he deserted Napoleon.* In the war of 1814, he had command of the Fifth German Army Corps, which took Mainz. When war broke out again in 1815, he commanded the Observation Corps of Alsace, and in every campaign he furnished a not inconsiderable contingent of troops, although the little land of Coburg had been almost exhausted by the extensive recruiting during the period of the Rhine Confederacy.

Under these circumstances, the advantages now gained by my father's house were very modest,† and its future depended more than ever on the activity and thoroughness of its members. My father devoted all his care to the prosperity of his land and his small capital. He skilfully directed not only his own finances, but those of his country, placed experienced men at the head of the administration, and in the year 1821 gave a liberal constitution to the dukedom of Coburg-Saalfeld, founded on the well-known articles of the Act of Confederacy, which demanded certain lawful regulations for every confederate land.

He dared, even after the acceptance of the Carlsbad resolutions, to oppose the steps taken by the presiding Powers which according to Gentzen's memorial wished to deprive the state's constitution of all the elements of popular representation.

Soon after the conclusion of peace in Paris, the three brothers, on whom rested the hopes of the House of Coburg, married almost at the same time.

Prince Ferdinand, who was a little more than a year

* My father's entrance into the Alliance was occasioned by an agreement with Russia, 12th and 24th November, with Prussia 23, and with Austria on the 24th of November.

† An enlargement of Coburg's frontier touching Bavaria had been considered, to which Metternich—as may have been seen in his document concerning the same, in Secret Archives, 1A, 13X—had signified his consent.

younger than my father, was highly thought of in the Austrian army. He had distinguished himself during the past wars on many occasions, particularly at Eckheim, where he won the Cross of Theresa, and immediately enlisted in the war of freedom of 1813, under a foreign name, as Napoleon had raised objections to seeing a Prince of Coburg in active service in Austria.*

In the year 1816, Prince Ferdinand married the young Princess Kohary and obtained possession of the large estates in Hungary, on which the Emperor Francis settled the Coburg entail. Meanwhile Prince Leopold had also married in the same year, his wife being the Princess Charlotte, daughter of George IV, which union, as is known, was disturbed only too soon by the death of the excellent Princess, heiress to the throne of England.

On the 13th of July, 1817, my father married Louise, the only child of Duke August of Saxe-Gotha and Altenburg, of the now extinct family of Gotha-Altenburg. My mother was born on the 31st December, 1800. At the time of her marriage with my father, her stepmother Caroline was still living, a Princess of Hesse Cassel, whom Duke August of Gotha-Altenburg had married as early as the year 1802, after the death of his first wife.

It appeared as if my parents' marriage must turn out most happily, and the universal joy reached the highest possible pitch, when, in the course of two years, two sons appeared as securities for the future of the House.

I was born on the 21st of June, 1818 and my brother Albert on the 26th August, 1819, the latter at the Castle of Rosenau, and I in the Ehrenburg at Gotha. They named me: Ernest August Charles John Leopold Alexander Edward. I was to be called Ernest. The christening took place, with all pomp, on the 24th June in the principal church of St Moritz.

When the ceremony was over my grandmother Augusta,

* Mention is made of the part taken by Prince Ferdinand in the French wars when belonging to the Austrian army in the lately published 'History of the Imperial Austrian 8th Hussar Regiment.'

a Princess of Reusz Ebersdorf, whose second husband my grandfather was, embraced her son, my father, and said aloud, so that the large assembly might hear, 'I hope that little Ernest will become as good a son to you as you have been to me.'

I heard these words on another occasion, when I was confirmed, for the same clergyman who baptised me, reminded my father on my confirmation of what my grandmother had said to him sixteen years before.

I must not omit to mention as worthy of attention, that the land of Coburg-Saalfeld made me a present of 12,455 florins as a baptismal present, the voluntary contributions of offices and towns, which was to be put out at compound interest, until my majority. I cannot think without emotion of this sacrifice on the part of the faithful burghers, a sacrifice which was considerable, after so many years of war.

It is known from the publications of the Queen of England respecting my brother's life, how short a time we enjoyed the advantage of growing up under our mother's eyes, and how quickly our family happiness was clouded over, after promising to be imperishable.

But I will not here deal with these matters again. That world which is designated under the widely significant name of historical does not look upon these more personal feelings of private life as of great worth, and they sink into the ocean of forgetfulness, with all the tears which they called forth.

After my mother's death my father took as his second wife the Würtemberg Princess Marie, his niece, who remained childless, but also formed a friendly gathering point for our widely scattered family until her death which occurred in 1860 only. Just as my father and his brothers furnished a rare example of unity in work, they remained in the closest relations with their sisters and their posterity so that my brother and I were accustomed from our earliest youth to look upon our beloved father as the head of an unusually large circle of relations.

From this strong family bond must have arisen the so commonly imagined Coburg family politics, which were really

nothing more than the friendly feeling of each separate member, a feeling which is so often wanting in princely families. Of my father's four sisters the Princess Julia was married to the Grand-Duke Constantine, and Antoinette to Duke Alexander of Würtemberg, then in the Russian service. The eldest and youngest need not be especially mentioned, and nearly every page will contain some remembrance of the fate of their families.

In 1804 Sophia married Count Mensdorff-Pouilly, whose four sons, of whom Alexander was best known, were in constant intercourse with us. My father's youngest sister, Victoria, was at first married to Prince Leinigen, and after his early death, became the wife of the Duke of Kent, of which marriage, as is known, Queen Victoria was the issue.

But my aunt Kent's eldest children, Charles and Feodora, Leinigen were also the founders of nearly allied families, who belonged altogether to our circle. Both were possessed of great mental gifts, and immensely beloved by their half-sister Queen Victoria. The letter which appeared in print of Feodora, who married Prince Hohenlohe, gives the best insight into the affectionate footing on which all these relations stood.

But loving as the friendship was which knit them together, nothing can be compared with the close intimacy in which my brother and I grew up. From our earliest years we shared every joy and sorrow together, as they came. And as, even after our separation, we continued to confide our thoughts and plans fully to each other, I may say that even amongst the people so close a bond between brothers is not often to be met with.

So undivided an influence did life, the world and our whole surroundings exert on us, that it would afford me the greatest pleasure, if, through these recollections of my growth and experiences I could impart something more particular concerning the habits and character of my dear brother, than can be done in any other way. By nature we were neither bodily nor mentally much alike. From earliest childhood my brother was the best loved, and enjoyed the good-will of

mankind as much as his greater bodily weakness seemed to require. His physical development did not keep pace with the quick unfolding of his remarkable mental powers; he needed protection, and had the physical leaning of the weaker towards the stronger.

As long as we remained together he willingly accepted the part of the one who needed help, which, however, did not prevent his following his own very decided will.

Our faithful governor Florschuetz has related so much concerning these things in the Queen's book that I in turn need only supply deficiencies. Florschuetz wrote a small essay on me, as well as on my brother, which has been a help to me in setting down the following reminiscences of my youthful days.

I must first of all lay the greatest weight upon my father's influence. After the separation from our mother, especially, he took the keenest interest and most unflagging in anything and everything which concerned our bringing-up, and even in our lessons.

With us were his pleasantest and almost his only daily conversations, and a more beautiful bond between a father and his sons it would be difficult to find. And he was one of those rare persons who, devoid of all pedagogic maxims, knew how to make an impression on young people through their very manner.

My father joined to his rare personal beauty a mind evenly balanced in every way and a deep inward calm. Had he not been born at a time when the education of young princes was carried out according to set rules, which are insufficient for the wants of the present day, he would have been a much greater man than was possible under existing circumstances. It would not be right to say that he would have devoted himself to science, though in those times princes were seldom allowed to visit the universities, and in the smaller Duchies the tutors were often not more than of mediocre education. Notwithstanding this, my father was at home in many branches of science, and had, as was necessary in his duties as Regent, become a far-seeing and sharpwitted man of business.

What won all hearts was the earnest mildness with which he interested himself in everything, the delicacy of feeling and the undesigned attention to custom of every kind. I never heard a harsh or ugly word from his lips, never saw an action of his which would not have satisfied every idea of good-breeding; we children looked upon him—and with right—as the ideal of perfection, and although he never spoke a stern word to us, we felt for him, not only love and adherence, but a degree of respect which bordered on fear.

He never instructed, he seldom blamed, praised unwillingly, and nevertheless, his personal influence was so powerful that we exerted ourselves more than if we had been either blamed or praised. Once, when he was asked by a relation if we studied diligently and behaved well, he answered: 'My children cannot misbehave, and they know of themselves that they must learn something in order to become able men, so I do not trouble myself further about them.' He understood how to awaken ambition and self-respect in the most skilful manner. His greatest enjoyment consisted in having us always with him as far as was possible.

The love of nature, the meaning of art and aesthetics were taught us by him almost involuntarily, as if in play; on the other hand, his demands on our attention, appreciation and quick grasp of the subject, were often too great. He never allowed a negligence in dress or carelessness of demeanour, any transgression was punished by a look alone, but a look which was so grave that it said more than a long lecture. As he assumed that we worked with diligence and perseverance to complete our education, he tried, in order to keep us fresh and courageous, to give us every pleasure on which he knew we had set our hearts. Hunting, fishing, riding, driving, were allowed us from our ninth year. On the other hand, he would never suffer the least complaint of bodily inconvenience, even of pain; we were hardened in every way. I remember that we once rode in the depth of winter over the mountain road from Coburg to Gotha, and suffered fearfully from the intense cold. On such an occasion my father expected us to show the self-command of grown men, and we

had to behave in a manly way in every such uncomfortable situation.

It will therefore be understood that we took part in everything which more actively occupied my father; under this head I will particularly mention building, the beautifying of the neighbourhood and the theatre. And even as boys, we obtained an insight into many government measures and affairs of state; as, in a fatherly way, my father had no secrets from us in such matters.

Although he leaned towards Conservatism, and, since the peace, looked upon ideas of freedom rather unfavourably than otherwise, yet, when but small boys, we were enthusiastic over everything which concerned the nation. The uncertain political longing for freedom, with which almost all young minds in Germany were at that time filled, stirred us too, and influenced our whole lives.

When our education began to assume a definite form, our governor, Florschuetz, became also our tutor in many branches, and bestowed particular attention on our Latin and mathematics. I think it will be not uninteresting to mention a few particulars concerning our studies, which in many respects differed from the usual course followed in the city schools.

The *Gymnasium illustre Casimirianum* in Coburg had enjoyed great consideration for a long time, but we were influenced on both sides to follow a different course from that which was set forth in the prospectus of this Institute. He left Greek out altogether, whereas natural history, chemistry and physics were imparted to us with a thoroughness then quite uncommon in Germany. I cannot say to how great an extent all were indebted to the influence and example of these useful changes from the Gymnasium course.

Florschuetz chose as his colleague in instruction in these departments of natural science a very distinguished man, Professor Hassenstein, whose son was afterwards my family physician for many years. The well-known gifted Griesz taught us mathematics.

The interest in and understanding of everything concerning nature and our progress in learning were not the only things

which we owed to these fruitful studies of realistic branches. The knowledge of natural science has something very satisfying about it, and I may say that my brother and I did not remain uninfluenced by the workings of this mental enfranchisement.

We were more advantageously brought up than many other princes, no form of obscurantism had the slightest power over us. The want of Greek was made up for by wide reading of translations or imitations of classical literature and the copious study of modern languages.

We spoke but one language at home. German was really our mother tongue, and reigned alone in our childish ideas,—a state of things which cannot fail to be of influence over the later unfolding and course of thought of everyone.

During the last century the French were carrying the cult of their language to the highest point in the education of their aristocracy; the German nobility, with a view to their material interests as well as their mental development, were growing up amidst a number of foreign languages. My brother and I, though not to our disadvantage, only began the study of French and English later on, and we made up by thoroughness and practice for any loss which we might have suffered through the want of acquaintance with the modern languages in childhood. Our Latin studies were also carried so far that they afforded us not only a rich source of formular cultivation, but a ready mastering of the Latin modes of expression.

We were also so competent in the conversational use of Latin that I was fond of debating in that tongue at the University, and therein excelled many of my college companions fresh from the Gymnasium. Of my brother it may particularly be said that he showed at an early date an original *doctrinary* way of handling all subjects. He was particularly skilled in the logical ordering of the most difficult themes of debate; and his views, even if not always the most correct, were invariably successfully brought to bear on the question by means of the keenest dialectics.

It was that mental talent and practice which, later, so

often gave him a superiority over others, and concerning which the Emperor Napoleon once characteristically said to me: 'His mind is so accurate that one is always afraid of entering into discussion with him, he is always right.'

The success attendant on such an education was also shown by the fact that we afterwards showed our ability as fluent speakers on many public occasions. The strong point of our tutor Florschuetz, was his wide and thorough grasp of historical knowledge.

He did not, as was then the case elsewhere, limit his lessons to antiquity, but extended them, by means of every help at hand, to the Middle Ages and the present epoch. German antiquity, which had but just been scientifically dug out of the accumulated rubbish of years, was made familiar to us to a certain degree by Florschuetz. At least we boys already knew that there was a great epoch of German life and culture, which may have been but too little prized by our half French forefathers of past centuries. So that, from the first, without being insensible to the charms of the German Middle Ages, by observing moderation, we were prevented from feeling the enthusiastic leaning which at that time influenced so many celebrated and clever men. The remarkable passion for going back to the childish prepossession for a long forgotten age and the romantic distortion of the century remained unknown to us, with all our vividly awakened interest in the poetry of the ancient German Christian era. This partiality was all the more obviated by the working of our religious and dogmatic studies. As is known, in Thuringian provinces rationalism was clung to with all tenacity, and when Frederick Perthes departed for Gotha, as is related in the description of his life, he felt himself very lonely with his sharply defined historical-christian tendencies. It was but natural, for St Paul's doctrine was kept here as in an impregnable fortress. People took an interest in the often unspeakably prosaic and sometimes absurd explanations of the Biblical wonders, just as others warmed more and more over the subject of mysticism. It is a real piece of good fortune that in those passionate days

of religious disputes such earnest and excellent men were forming our minds, like Bretschneider. He was like a friend of the family. His extraordinary learning and rare activity, his important scientific services, as well as his easy, companionable ways, shielded both him and us from the reproach of taking too light a view of religious things and the historical puzzles of dogmatics; but our christianity lay in Bretschneider's hand, and his fellow-thinkers in a pleasant unanimity with the ideas of modern men and, one might almost say, with a comfortable security concerning the union of reason and faith.

Although we looked upon it neither as our task nor as particularly necessary to solve the many difficulties attendant on these ticklish matters, yet we were able to look forward cheerfully to our confirmation, being neither too alarmed by the indiscoverable or already discovered, nor too much hemmed in by the ideas of a bigoted church. Lessons in religion itself had been given us brothers by a clergyman of the name of Jakoby, formerly Gymnasium director in Rinteln, and the Court preacher at Coburg, the pattern of a sensible as well as intelligent teacher. He was possessed of good knowledge in church history. The preparation which he caused us to make for confirmation was encyclopædic, so that we were able at our examination to display a surprising amount of familiarity with church questions.

If the official statement extols the fact that no single question put by the examiner was so worded as to be answered simply by the word Yes or No, we for our part can be glad that no formula was thus forced upon us through the strict and simple confession of faith in which we might have felt wounded in the conscientiousness of our young minds.

As I was then very near my eighteenth birthday it is not to be wondered at that I thought it necessary to begin to consider what public confession I should make, for the time of *naïve* consent to what was desired of me was almost past.

My brother also took up the question in all its difficulty, for what Florschuetz says of him is quite true, that, 'he was unusually earnest and full of reflection.' But when Martin in

his Biography of Prince Albert also speaks of his 'natural piety,' it was probably on account of the English public, for this description suited him certainly even less than it did me.

At length the question whether we intended to remain true to the Evangelical Church had to be answered. My answer has been made known through the official report.

'I and my brother,' said I, 'are determined to remain faithful to the acknowledged truth.' One of my uncle's letters addressed to me on the occasion of my confirmation has always remained highly interesting to me on account of the man and the occasion, and with it I shall close this chapter. The reader will allow me to acquaint him with the reply of the youthful candidate, as he must have the intention of bestowing some interest in the following leaves on my person as well as on the history of the times. My uncle wrote with the peculiar, humorous, worldly wisdom which, as will be seen, characterised all his correspondence, on the 11th of August, 1835, from Ostend :—

'My Dear Ernest,—It has not been possible for me to answer your friendly letter sooner, but as the young gentlemen did not write to me any too soon after their confirmation, I shall not allow my conscience to prick me too much on the subject.

'I heard with great sympathy and pleasure that the important ceremony which closes your childhood was so well gone through, and that you took part so well in a matter which must greatly move the heart of every good young man. Although I have seen so little of you during the past years, I have a fatherly affection for you, and wish, as far as in me lies to contribute in every way to your happiness.

'It is gratifying to me that you have had a home education; even if it is less practical in many things, it makes both heart and mind kinder and more full of feeling, which I consider a great blessing. You are now old enough to prepare for the affairs of life in addition to your studies; your future field of labour is a fine one, and contains fewer thorns and vexations than many others; it is always wide enough for

you to be able to sow a great deal of good seed. Life, which, as you stand half inside half outside of its portals, may seem uncommonly long to you, is nevertheless not so; time flies by quickly, and neglected work cannot always be made up for.

'The most beautiful aim in life is to do good, as much as possible. The real spirit of Christianity demands that man shall work *every moment during life*, and without ostentation benevolently and humbly towards God and mankind to influence the lives of others.

'He only is a real Christian who *steadily and really follows through life* the teaching of his beautiful and gentle religion.

'It is very hard to carry this out fully, by reason of the many failings of human nature, but *much can* and *must* be done. Let this, my son, be your aim. Before all things, be strictly just to everyone, *be he who he may;* the Christian himself must be more, he must be indulgent, must reflect before he exclaim against others, and judge if they do not merit indulgence. Two things are also extraordinarily important in a public man, he must be strictly honest and truthful.

'By considering these points with intelligence, one will be able to prevent much unhappiness and vexation, and assure for one's self a very important possession, the esteem of others. Education is universal in these days, and it is therefore an easy task to distinguish one's self amongst other men of intelligence and education; just, true characters, which remain always the same, which can be depended upon, are very seldom to be found on severe trial, so that the man who is good, honest and true, assures to himself through these straits a position whose security will give him a high place amongst his fellow creatures, and at the same time more than all, the peace of soul so necessary in the many storms of life, a peace without which one cannot but feel miserable even when the greatest success has been attained.

'Beware, as eldest son, of selfishness; it is to the interest of many to encourage this most unlovely of traits in a young Prince, and afterwards to exploit it as a fertile mine.

'The *I* easily becomes overmastering in a man, do not lose

sight of this, and do not allow it to get the upper hand; the egotist serves no one with love, and prepares much trouble for himself besides, for many things are continually happening to wound the feelings, and the *I*, when spoiled, is incredibly sensitive.

'I will not administer too strong a dose of maxims at one time, and I beg you to confide to me your views on what I have written. I should like to know them, I hope to see you continue a thorough course of study; at your age learning is more usefully digested because better understood. The languages should also be carefully kept up, for their own sake, for they have the advantage of enlarging the point of view.

'Write to me often, it will be useful to you, and affords me the opportunity of giving you much good advice; few men have earned so painful and varied an experience as I; and I will gladly give you the benefit of it.

'My letter is so long that it is time to say farewell to you. Greet your Counsellor Florschuetz for me, and believe me, my dear Ernest, ever your faithful Uncle and Friend,

'LEOPOLD R.'

'*Rosenau, 6th September* 1835.

'MOST GRACIOUS UNCLE,—Accept my most heartfelt thanks for your letter, which was as instructive as it was friendly; and which caused me all the more pleasure, as it was the first which I have received from you. You gave me therein such useful and excellent advice, for life in general and for my own particular calling, that my becoming a good and practical man depends only on my following the same.

'What could be more salutary to me, most gracious uncle, than to attend to your instruction, with the most heartfelt earnestness, for no one has learned to know life in its pleasantest and saddest aspects as you have.

'Be sure, dear uncle, that your words are a mighty incitement to me to keep a guard on my actions during life, and so to shape them as to earn your esteem and increase the pleasure of my parents.

'I feel plainly, that, as you say, I have reached the turning-point. My boyhood is past, and although golden chains still hold me back, I do not forget for a single moment that the earnest period of life is near at hand.

'The time of trial is before me, when I shall have to furnish tangible proofs that the instruction and warnings which were given me as a boy, have struck root, and to show whether I have strength enough to follow them.

'My parents' great love, my governor's friendly advice, and now the certainty in your dear letter that you take no less an interest in our happiness, will make me even more stable in this time of trial and give me strength as youth and man always to preserve clearness of mind, and the love of truth and justice.

'I think of the past only with the greatest pleasure. It contains for the most part pleasant memories, and although life was easier and joined to more pleasures, than that of others of my age, yet I realise to what that is owing, and know that we cannot excel by means of appearances alone, but by inner worth, by the superior performances through which we raise ourselves above the level of others.

'I am on this account very grateful to everyone who reminds me of it, and thank you particularly, most gracious uncle, for having shown me the way with such wise observations.

'That *I*, which, as you say, must not have its own way, unfortunately asserts itself only too often in mankind, and, to be quite honest with you, in me also. How many faults do I not find in me, when I thoroughly consider your admonitions, and how shall I not have to work in order to become such as to win your whole love.

'How little I have learned, when I compare it with what I still have to learn, and when I think how much is expected of a Prince in these days! But the more exacting the era is the more firmly must a man stand, and you will certainly not refuse me your wise counsel respecting my further improvement.

'Oh! how I should like it if my brother and I could stay

with you for a while, to learn in your school and strengthen ourselves by your superior example. We would do everything which lay in our power to please you, and you should certainly not be dissatisfied with us.

'Yet I fear it may be wearisome to you, with your many occupations, if I write to you at greater length. May I venture to hope soon to have another letter from you?

'You do not know how much pleasure you thus afford me.

'Again thanking you for your hearty letter, I recommend myself to your further favour, and remain with the deepest respect,—Your faithful nephew,

'ERNEST.'

CHAPTER II

FROM THE VIENNA CONGRESS TO 1848.—DEVELOPMENT OF GERMANY ARRESTED.—THE HELLENIC QUESTION.—CROWN OFFERED TO PRINCE LEOPOLD.—DECLINED.—THE JULY REVOLUTION IN PARIS.—THE BELGIAN QUESTION.—THE COURT OF COBURG IN DISGRACE.—GERMAN CONFEDERACY UNDERMINED.—BANISHMENT OF THE DUKE OF BRUNSWICK.—HISTORY OF THE GOTHA SUCCESSION.—ATTITUDE OF SAXE-MEININGEN.

SEPARATION OF THE DUKE AND DUCHESS.—LETTER FROM THE CZAR.—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN METTERNICH AND THE DUKE.—THE PLANS OF TERRITORIAL DIVISION.—SOLEMN ENTRY INTO GOTHA.—STATE ECONOMICAL DIFFICULTIES.—VISIT TO MECKLENBURG SCHWERIN FOR THE JUBILEE.—MEET CROWN PRINCE OF PRUSSIA.—IMPRESSIONS.—TO VIENNA AND TEPLITZ.—BEGINNING OF RUSSIAN ASCENDANCY IN GERMANY.—DEATH OF WILLIAM IV OF ENGLAND AND HANOVER.—THE NEW KING'S MEASURES; POPULAR DISAPPROVAL.—PORTUGAL AND SPAIN.—ACCESSION OF DONNA MARIA.—MARRIED TO FERDINAND OF COBURG.—HELLENIC AFFAIRS.—OTTO OF BAVARIA CHOSEN KING.—STRANGENESS BETWEEN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

GERMANY'S development was, so to speak, interrupted in the first half of the century, and the wheel of time stuck fast in its course, through the encroachment of mightier reactionary powers of state. The creations of the Vienna Congress will therefore be looked upon simply as hindrances to the national spirit, and the German Confederacy and its conditions as a preparation for immortalizing the calm and the political laziness of the burghers, and the exclusive dominion of a chosen few over the widely-extending mass of the German nation.

On the other hand, the course of events, even in this apparently quiet decade, strikes the man who culls and sets together his recollections, chosen from amongst the copious particulars, and the large number of exciting occurrences of daily life,

and who, with the consciousness of mighty detail, to this day feels the effects of the disturbance of times when everything was in ferment, the efforts and striving of a restless national war of minds.

Only in the most private notes of statesmen, in the documentary intercourse of prominent men, in diaries and fine works of literature is shown the political excitement, which was less loud, though perhaps of greater inner force than is the case to-day.

It is true that that which is known as public opinion, found little occasion, since the time of the Vienna Congress up to the year which was often known in reactionary circles as the 'mad year' to show itself conveniently and fearlessly on the surface of political life.

Anyone who wished to become intimately acquainted with the ideas of that time, with the wants of the century, could not let himself be deceived by its contingencies and many falsehoods, nor the momentary political aspect; but in these ideas, which were more reserved and kept under, more sought for than self-asserting, lay a hidden charm which had the power to harden both character and belief. The rising generation enjoyed a political schooling which was more intrinsic and aimed more at spontaneity.

The means of obtaining, and aids to, scientific learning being far poorer, far less convenient and less advantageous, political education in Germany was not to be so easily gained by the pleasant reading of newspapers and stereographed parliamentary speeches, nor from freely offered state documents and rich diplomatic sources, such as now render it possible for the lowest subject to gain a certain insight into state life.

To acquire knowledge of mankind, statesmen, princes and monarchs, was, even in the highest positions, a task which could not be completed without strong effort and the deepest study. But the generation to whom the gain of widely-embracing and political worldly experience was made more difficult, often guarded the acquired possession, the conviction gained, the mode of thought, even with greater care and enthusiasm. The signs of the time were on the whole, if not founded upon, yet to a certain degree more fitted for the

development of political character and its establishment on a firmer footing.

Germany's universal condition was looked upon by outsiders as very desperate, and was by preference and with great satisfaction represented as being in this state. The rising generation had a feeling of opposition against the men of former times and their systems, and they gave way to it with angry negation and sometimes violent action; but there was not a total want of positive elements and efforts in the reigning circles of the European world, with which to work a change in Europe's condition by means of progressive development. My father's whole house took a well-known prominent part in this great alteration and transformation of European forms of state, so obstinately opposed by the ideas of the century. The greatest and most important of the questions which occupied the European Powers and the public mind of the entire educated world at the end of the twentieth year, was the Greek question, the restoration of Hellenism in the states and ideas of Europe.

In the centre of this great movement stood a Prince of Coburg. The interest of the diplomatic world was for a time concentrated on this prince and his position with reference to the newly-erected throne, as they reached to a personal solution of the important matter. No one has known how to tell of the older relations and family bonds of our House as a whole, and the single members of the same, so well and so characteristically as King Leopold.

Whether his own life is depicted in an entirely satisfactory way is doubtful. Concerning his attitude in the Greek question particularly, no universal criticism has been brought to light, and the extraordinary wisdom in affairs of state and deep foresight of the man who unwillingly renounced his ambition for an inspiring idea which filled his whole soul, has by no means been recognised to a sufficient degree. If character and clearness of will were ever shown in their full renunciation, they were shown here. It is true that personal inclination was not in this case entirely without influence on my uncle. I can still perfectly remember my grandmother's angry com-

plaints and outbursts of grief, over the fact that her beloved son Leopold was forced to look forward to an uncertain fate. She tried as well as she could to warn him against it, and to oppose it. I myself have copied many of her letters which were intended to remain strictly secret, and which she tried so to word as to shake my uncle's determination. But he really felt the deepest interest in the Greek question; and has done so all his life. That the throne of the wavering decendants of the ancient Hellenes, was denied the House of Coburg, he considered up to the last years of his life as a piece of ill-luck, which he felt himself bound to make up for.

Two opinions, so to speak, might be held of the Philhellenists of those days in England and on the Continent, opinions which could only be put into words, the one by Byron, and the other by Canning. Louis of Bavaria stands before us as one of the princely friends of the Greeks in Germany, in analogous relation to his youthful friend of many years, Leopold of Coburg. They say that the latter's sympathy for the Greeks also arose solely from personal influence. His relations to the Greeks do not however extend further back than the year 1825.

Meanwhile, how little question there was of a future Greek throne remains undecided. But Prince Leopold never allowed himself to be so completely mastered by his kindly and intellectual interest in the freedom of the Greeks, as to misunderstand the political conditions of the state which was to be founded anew, as has been done both before and since. The explanation with which, on the 21st of May, 1830, he definitely withdrew as candidate for the Greek throne, was, and still remains one of the most brilliant state documents of modern times, by which the actually established relations were justified in a rarely able manner.

One remark in this explanation deserves more attention than has been accorded it in historiography. My uncle positively denied having given the President reason to believe that he was willing to adopt the Greek religion. Though his candidature was supported mainly by the Czar of Russia and the King of France, yet the Prince's views were too deeply

rooted in the English system of politics for him to accept the part chosen by them of a 'diplomate of the allied Powers, to keep Greece in subjection by force of arms.'

The momentary situation was spoiled for the Prince through the reigning English Cabinet, which opposed the candidature of a son-in-law of King George IV. As early as in December 1829, Lord Wellington expressed his views on the question of the Greek throne in a letter to Lord Aberdeen, they being that he considered the choice of the Greeks of great importance indeed, but that he wished first of all to see English interests vouched for by the new king. When Prince Leopold was plainly declared not to be the candidate chosen by the British Cabinet, it may be supposed that he would have been even less ready to play the part of a tool in the interests of any foreign state whatever.

His endeavours in November, 1829, to bring King Charles X, and at the same time the English Government, by means of personal influence, to decide more in the interests of the Greek throne had, as is known, but little success; the change of candidates for the throne made by the Great Powers showed how little decisive was the neuter point of view which Prince Leopold so clearly brought forward in the already mentioned declaration of May 21, 1830.

The latter severed the binding link of the negotiations which were to bring about the transplantation of the House of Coburg into the new kingdom of Greece. But two years later the attention of the political world was again fastened on our House, as a definite settlement in the condition of things could no longer be neglected.

I will later on relate something concerning the remarkable transactions which were carried on with my father himself concerning the adoption of the Greek throne; and which have hitherto remained entirely unknown to his biographers. I will merely remark here how strangely it moved me when, a quarter of a century later, the same question arose concerning me, the nephew of the man who had with rare keenness of insight refused the throne because he recognised that the state, which had yet to be formed, would be too small and weak.

A few months later the interest of the entire world was suddenly, one might almost say for ever, turned aside from the little Greek nation.

The July revolution and its effect on the whole of Europe caused all further-lying political interest to disappear as through a stage trap-door. People had a feeling of having assisted with lively sympathy, loud applause and classical delight at a mighty representation of deliverance given far away in Turkey, and then suddenly returning home to find so many things badly looked after and in the deepest disorder. They thought of themselves, of their neighbours, their country, the condition of their own state, of the untenableness and perishableness of old and the uncertainty of new things.

News of the occurrences in Paris reached the German capitals slowly and uncertainly enough, yet always too soon to find the reigning powers in even a tolerable state of readiness. From the course of events in Paris, one need hardly have been astonished at the fall of the legitimate king, once the shock of the people's bloody victory during the three days' fighting was over; still everyone lived in a state of continual excitement. The king's abdication, the installation of the Regency, the flight of Charles X, Louis Philippe's kingship, each separate crisis of events had engendered its particular retroaction and singular anxiety. Were we drifting into another war with revolutionary France, or should the old powers recognise the new state of things?

People hardly had time to think over these questions before the revolutionary brand had been thrown across the frontiers of France.

The Belgian provinces rebelled in September; on the 4th of October followed the declaration of independence of the provisory Brussels government; November brought the Polish Revolution as a frightful sequel to the Parisian July days. Such shocks had not been remembered by our fathers since the end of the last century, whereas the sons had bright hopes of an entirely new age.

Was not the youthful world right in letting these events convince it, that they had a great future before it, and that its fathers had omitted to do much which ought to have been done?

The Belgian question next unfolded itself in a decisive way for the House of Coburg, on the 12th of January, 1831, M. Paul Devaux brought forward in the National Congress in Brussels the candidature of the Prince of Saxe-Coburg, in opposition to that of the Duc de Nemours, of the Duke of Leuchtenberg and the still boyish Prince Otto of Bavaria: 'I know,' said he, 'how great is the prepossession in this assembly against an English Prince, but you forget that the Prince of Saxe-Coburg, by accepting the Belgian crown, annexes himself to France, and will therefore be more French than English.'

Devaux spoke in an equally clever and decisive way of the Prince's evangelical confession of faith, which could be no hindrance to his election, as the future constitution of the kingdom must remain in the power of the majority.

'As the majority here is Catholic,' said he, 'it will perhaps be desirable that the Head of the executive Power is not also a Catholic.'

On the 3rd of June 1831, Prince Leopold of Coburg was chosen king, by 152 out of 196 votes, on condition he accepted the constitution.

After my uncle had made his state entrance into Brussels on the 21st of July, he took the oath of the constitution and then made a tour through the country, when on the 1st of August, at Lüttich, the news arrived that the Dutch intended to open hostilities on the 4th.

Then followed the negotiations with the guaranteeing Powers concerning the French intervention, which King Leopold demanded without delay or hypocritical lingering, for he well knew that the more bindingly the western Powers were engaged to carry out the London Protocol, the more secure his throne would be.

The short war with the Dutch could only serve to settle the new state more firmly on its basis. The loyal way in

which he kept all constitutional promises, even those for which the king had no special liking, soon aroused almost universal enthusiasm for his person, and only a short space of time was necessary to establish Belgium as the constitutional pattern state of the Continent. Henceforth, the new king was looked upon as a living example of the union of monarchy with the political freedom of the people, and in the bond between the Houses of Coburg and Orleans, the world contemplated the most certain foundation for the final victory of liberal principles in Europe.

My father desired his sons to receive a fixed impression of the country whose fate had just been so intimately linked with that of our throne. He therefore allowed my brother and myself to accompany him on a journey which he made to Belgium to see my uncle at the end of July, 1832. It forms one of my first recollections of a personal share in the great political events of that time.

In Brussels, where every public square and every street told of the mighty struggle which had taken place two years before, I first conceived an idea of what the modern European world with its startling events is striving to gain. We accompanied our father and uncle to see the first review held by the King of a newly organised portion of the Belgian army, near Alost, and obtained permission to visit the Belgium outposts near Antwerp, where the citadel was still in the hands of the Dutch under General Chassé. As my uncle and my father had so very little opposition to the revolutionary gait of things in Belgium, it was only natural that I and my brother developed no excessive conservative views. In the Princely Houses, on the other hand, and particularly at the German Court, a certain hatred had arisen in consequence of this very reaction against the state regulations of other countries. They could not and would not understand how a German Prince belonging to one of the oldest families, could allow himself to be chosen King on pretext of an open revolution. This was carried so far that in many circles the name of our House was for a time uttered only with a certain aversion.

It was so much talked about that in a large club, Prince Edward of Altenburg was much applauded by the older men for having remarked that it was a great pity that the Coburg Court could no longer be visited, because one would always expect to hear the word Belgium spoken there. I must mention this particularly, as this attempt, made for thirty years, to exclude our House, deeply influenced me and my brother's whole development. We were often put aside, and, as it were, forced into a position opposed to the popular views of our circles in Germany.

Can anyone think that the powerful victory of modern ideas of State, left no trace behind them on the German nation?

The German Confederacy had been undermined since the year 1819. There was no way of leading the Germany, created by the Vienna Congress, into a quiet and healthy line of development. The deep corruption must not be sought only in the unwieldy, severe and aimless use of means of prevention against all opposing measures as done by the government of police. The greatest injury to national development lay much more in the secret political wars, in which the members of the Confederacy were set against one another by the Carlsbad resolutions!

A design to strengthen the smaller Powers by the help of the greater, as it appeared during the conference of Ministers at Carlsbad and Vienna, must have called forth an opposition through which the most important national fundamental principles would have to be sacrificed. An interminable gradation of power amongst the members of the Confederacy, without the real state membership, and healthy friction of the natural difference in the various classes and divisions of the nation, undermined confidence in every familiar government measure, and, in fact, severed every bond of feeling in the Confederacy.

In reigning circles the feeling for Germany was null; the consideration for the Confederacy, shown by the single states was regarded only as a sad necessity. Amongst governments of such unequal strength, the experiences of twenty years

disturbed all thought of state bonds to the same degree in which they began to grow in the nation. Whilst the separation between the reigning heads and those over whom they reigned was growing ever wider, the desire to bring about a complete downfall was gradually gaining the upper hand. Public opinion was everywhere more republican than national.

The July revolution found Germany in this condition.

The movements which followed were next to the form of state and the constitutional questions regarded by the middle and smaller states as that which was known as liberalism, in imitation of the French struggles. The ancient mode was looked upon by conservative statesmen for the most part as untenable by virtue of the financial condition of the states, as for that reason success had hardly anywhere been obtained in putting straight the pecuniary affairs disturbed by years of war. The upper classes were obstinate about giving their consent to extra taxes and least of all inclined towards complying with the quickly increasing wants of the modern state particularly, as well as those of the army.

People therefore expected from the introduction of as like constitutions as possible, for instance, the French in its corrected form of 1830, or that which had just been adopted in Belgium,—the healing of all the morbid diseases of the nation. The important experience to which Guizot once gives expression, that political liberty is by no means inherent in an exclusive form of Government, was then only too greatly misapprehended in Germany, and it was believed that an only too sporadic political freedom might be conjured up in the smaller and middle states by bringing as quickly as possible, the form of Government into force, which was regarded in the exclusive sense of the word as the only constitutional one.

At the present day one can hardly imagine what an obstinate and stiff notion the fourth and fifth decade had of political freedom, and in half a lifetime more it will perhaps not be understood at all. Guizot's bent was looked upon in France as *doctrinaire*, but the constitutional doctrines of Germany accepted the peculiarities of a dogmatic form of wisdom.

Meanwhile, powerful upheavals had taken place in Southern and Western Germany. As early as the year 1830, noticeable tumults had broken out in the Prussian Rhine provinces. The movement in Cassel began on the 6th of September and was not stopped by the acceptance of the new constitution by the Grand-Duke on the 5th of January 1831. The September seditions in Leipzig and Dresden were followed by disturbances in almost all the large towns, and particularly in the manufacturing ones of Saxony. Prince Frederick's nomination as co-regent and the appeal of the orders which were occupied with the working out of a new constitution, were of little use in reducing things to order. The deliberations and debates over the new constitutions had partly revealed a character of unfruitfulness, which gave continual rise to new and more excessive demands and disturbances. In Hanover, where the reign of King William IV opposed no difficulties to a constitutional revision, the new state's fundamental law was first published on the 26th of September 1833.

The monarchical principle in Germany received its worst blow through the banishment of the Duke of Brunswick, whose attempts to regain possession of his power by main force threw Gotha for some time into a state of disquiet. I can still clearly remember the excitement when Prince Charles was making his preparations here, and improvising his attempted *coup de main.*

A certain degree of uncertainty was felt in reigning circles as to what it would be best to do in the case.

When the Confederacy expressed itself against the Duke, and Metternich negatived Bellinghausen's question whether the exiled Duke would receive help from the Confederacy, it seemed as if everything had all at once been changed.

The German Great Powers and many smaller states had no clear perception of the fact that a forced compliance, unattended by a real change of system, must become more hurtful and dangerous than the inflexibility which the Czar Nicholas manifested towards the Poles.

Now, when I cast a special glance over the Thuringian Dukedoms, it is to be first remembered that a far-reaching

change in the state of possession had taken place here but a few years before. It was therefore somewhat to be feared that the revolutionary movements in the west might also react on these small states. But it may be said that my father, in Coburg, as well as in the newly acquired Gotha, understood so well, through his great forbearance with and keen foresight into new wants, how to arrange matters, that, in the midst of the greatest commotion, everything remained quiet and tranquil.

The time has now come to give a somewhat more exact account of the history of the Gotha succession, which fell to my father after manifold and, to some extent, very interesting negotiations.

It was, so to speak, the first matter of state which happened during my life, and which, through its immediate effect made a deep impression on me. But there were special moments in these small quarrels over the Gotha succession, which must have been of some worth as regarded the relation between the State and Confederacy, as well as the personal and dynastic condition of things.

At the death of my grandfather Duke Augustus of Saxe-Gotha and Altenburg on the 17th of May 1822, the only living representative of his house, besides my mother, was Duke Frederick IV, who became a Catholic in 1807. It is certainly characteristic of the deeply-rooted dynastic tenacity which filled the particular states of even the single branches of a House, that in Gotha, at the death of Duke Augustus, no livelier wish was formed than that Duke Frederick, whose faculties were notoriously weak, should marry, because they did not want to come under a 'strange Government.'

My grandfather had meantime, as early as the year 1821, made preparations in case his branch should die out, and proposed through Privy Counsellor von Lindenau to a conference of the Saxon Houses at Arnstadt in October, certain measures as the basis of a future negotiation concerning the succession.

1. Saxe-Meiningen was to abandon the expected gradual-heirship, and on the other hand Saxe-Coburg and Saxe-Hildburghausen would not demand the fulfil-

ment of the portion to be expected by them from the inheritance of Ernest the Pious.

2. The strict segregation of the allodiums of the fief would be entirely abandoned, whereas Saxe-Meiningen and Saxe-Hildburghausen would pay the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg a fixed sum of money as allodial heiress-presumptive.

3. Three Dukedoms were to be formed out of the assembled possessions of the entire ducal Houses.

(*a*) For Saxe-Meiningen from the present Meiningen lowlands and the Dukedom of Gotha.

(*b*) For Saxe-Coburg from the Meiningen highlands, the Dukedom of Hildburghausen and the present possessions of Saxe-Coburg.

(*c*) For Saxe-Hildburghausen from the Dukedom of Altenburg.

Although these propositions made by Duke August were only generally accepted *ad referendum*, still it was at least agreed that in the case of Duke Augustus' unexpected death, the Government, in case Frederick IV's ability to succeed became doubtful, would be carried out in Gotha-Altenburg, in the name of the three related Saxon Courts, until the matter of succession was decided.

Meanwhile Freiherr von Könitz, came forward immediately after the Arnstadt meeting of the Meiningen Ministers, with a written explanation that the lineal-gradual succession in the Ducal House of Saxony still held, and that the Meiningen line would therefore have the next right to succeed. But this was on no account to occur, in case of dissatisfaction on the part of the other Houses concerned, particularly through a supplement to the inheritance of the house of Ernest perhaps expected by them.

Whilst Meiningen was taking this standpoint more and more decisively, and interceding for the lineal-gradual succession by means of various historically correct transactions, both of the other Saxon Houses appealed to the Roemhilder agreement of 1791, which established the strict inheritance of heirs of the line, and on the strength of this, tried particularly

to place my father in opposition to Duke Bernhard Erich Freund. At my father's suggestion it was first decided, several months later in Meiningen, to entrust the affair of intervention between the related Courts to the Privy Counsellor von Lindenau of Gotha.

As Duke Bernhard Erich agreed to take possession of the territory in the name of all three Courts should Duke Frederick die, the proposed future division of the land was so completely negatived that in the beginning of the year 1824, the feeling between the Courts was highly hostile. On the 16th of January 1824, Duke Bernhard Erich wrote as follows to my father:—

'To your . . . . esteemed letter of the 5th of this month I have, after ripe reflection, the following humble reply to make:—

'I am fully convinced that I do not desire anything to which I have no right. But I cannot conceal from your, etc., that my confidence in my rights has been much strengthened of late. Regard for the interest of my House and the territory of Gotha and Altenburg does not allow me to return to the offers of July in the last year, nor to your, etc., negotiations; I therefore invite your, etc., again openly expressing my humble views, to examine our several rights in the compromisory manner agreed upon, with the help of the Ducal Lord Agnates, named in the communication of the Lord Privy Councillor, and to have them rightly recognised.

'Nothing which may occur between us in consequence of this matter, can lessen the great respect and friendly and cousinly, etc.'

As the divisional transactions appeared in the main to be completely shipwrecked, my father no longer neglected making sure of the allodial inheritance of the Gotha-Altenburg land for his consort and sons. Already, on the 12th of May 1823, the Duchess Louise, my mother, as daughter to Duke August and sole heiress of the Gotha line, gave full powers to Counsellor of the Regency, Lotz, in accordance with the condi-

tions of the established rules of the assembled lines of the Ducal House of Saxe-Gotha, on the 28th of July 1791, at Roemhild, to examine and settle the above-mentioned allodium, that it might be delivered up in case of the decease of Frederick IV.

This settlement of the matter, which might be considered as an allodial inheritance, could not self-evidently be very well refused by the government of Gotha, and the more thoroughly and trustworthily this work was completed, the greater was the impression produced by the results themselves on the Duke Bernhard Erich.

He might indeed have raised objections against the claims to a number of possessions as allodial inheritances, but this could only entangle the matter in a still greater degree.

In consequence of my parents' separation, the rights of possession over the allodium of Gotha naturally descended to me and my brother Albert, on the 2nd of September 1824.

When Duke Frederick IV died on the 11th of February 1825, Counsellor of the Regency, Lotz, had by particular command taken possession in my name and my brother's, of all offices and lands which appeared to belong to the allodial inheritance. This caused no inconsiderable excitement in Meiningen as well as in Hildburghausen. As both Courts protested against the allodial nature of the claimed property on the 25th of February and the 11th of March, my father expressed himself on the 25th of April as ready to accept any reasonable accommodation on condition that his rights should not be too roughly handled. But the principal thing was that the case of the extinction of the line of Gotha had really occurred, and that even the basis of an understanding such as my grandfather had tried to establish in the year 1822 had been completely destroyed.

What was one to do, where could we find a solution according to state rights of the Thuringian inheritance question?

It is of interest that the arbitration gained the full consent of all statesmen, as well those of the smaller states as those of Austria and Prussia, on one point only. They were all

decided on preferring every tribunal to that of the German Confederacy. If the absolute emptiness, according to law, of the regulations of the Confederacy was ever shown, it was shown in the affair of the Thuringian inheritance.

If it had been in any way possible, the Thuringian Courts would have preferred to raise the matter to an international question. Duke Frederick's death and the state of things at that moment were known to every Court, and from both German and foreign Governments came expressions of sympathy and the heart-felt wish that the matter might be reduced to arbitration amongst the Saxon Houses alone. Here and there only was a notion that 'the co-operation of the assembled Confederacy might be necessary'—thought of as possible.

The King of Würtemberg declared that in this case, he would be influenced in the view he took of this case, only by what was right, as was his custom.

Frederick William II, on the contrary, limited himself to assuring the Saxon Houses of his honest sympathy in this painful affair. King Max Joseph of Bavaria alone spoke at some length of the whole case, and was the first to suggest an idea which was afterwards to lead to the untying of the knot. 'This situation fills me with an honest desire to see such pitiable misunderstandings cleared away as soon as possible by an amicable agreement. As a just decision is connected through arbitration, partly with a process of mediation as fruitless as it is far-fetched, partly as tiresome in itself, it would, in my estimation, be more advantageous for both sides, if, failing to come to an agreement concerning this purely family matter, they would submit to some compromise, the rules of which might perhaps be requested of His Royal Majesty of Saxony, as the Head of the whole House, or the Grand Duke of Weimar, as the Head of the Ernestine line.'

The whole question of succession assumed, through the introduction of foreign Powers, an aspect all the more grave, that, with few exceptions, everyone was convinced that in Germany's new rule of Alliance, Germany by no means possessed inward strength enough to make a just decision.

The Emperor Alexander was also tempted to raise himself up in private German affairs, and it may further be said that it was a great piece of good luck that the matter occurred before the Emperor Nicholas ascended the throne, for he would have taken advantage of such an opportunity to make Germany feel the supremacy which he would fain have had over her.

The Emperor Alexander, on the contrary, showed himself unwilling to accede to the request for intervention, made to him in the hurry of affairs. On the 14th of March, 1825, he wrote with acknowledged unselfishness:—

'I hear with real pain from Your Most Serene Highness's letter of the 19th February that divers opinions have arisen amongst the different branches of the House of Saxe-Gotha, owing to the extinction of the line of Gotha-Altenburg. The questions which have been brought forward by this unfortunate event too nearly touch the quiet and well-being of an interesting portion of Germany for me not to feel a sincere wish to see them settled as soon as possible, according to principles of strict justice and political reasoning.

'But, faithful to the line of conduct which I have invariably set down for myself, with regard to the affairs of Germany, I could not take part in any intervention like that which at this moment fills their Ducal Highnesses of Saxony with solicitude. Doubtless Your Most Serene Highness will not fail to appreciate the motives which lead me to act in this way. I beg you to accept the assurance of my distinguished consideration. ALEXANDER.

'*St Petersburg, the* 14*th March*, 1825.'

Austria's attitude, which must doubtless have made a steady impression upon Duke Bernhard Erich also, was all the more important under these circumstances.

The state of affairs in the Thuringian Dukedom was too well known to Prince Metternich for him to have been able to decide the lineal-gradual succession represented by Meiningen.

A very good understanding had already existed between Metternich and my father, born of the campaigns of 1813 and 1814, as well as the time of Congress. In his journeys to Johannisberg, Metternich seldom failed to make an excursion to Coburg, of which he was very fond. My father had thus learned the most important events of the Congress of 1820–22 from Metternich, and therefrom sprung a lively and most friendly interchange of letters between the two men, of which I shall however make no use, as they date farther back than my remembrance; I may, however, be allowed to fully reproduce Metternich's energetic letter of the 27th February 1825, on the Gotha succession affair, as it was not without importance on account of its juridical contents, and at the same time showed in what moral and political preponderance the Austrian Chancellor stood with regard to German matters.

'MOST SERENE DUCAL HIGHNESS,—The information so kindly conveyed to me by your Serene Highness, through the honoured letter of the 14th inst., concerning the sudden decease of your Serene Highness's Lord Uncle his late reigning Serene Highness, the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, I allow myself the honour hereby to express my most hearty condolence, as well as my honest desire that kind Providence may be inclined to compensate for this sad occurrence by pleasant and cheering events for your Serene Highness's self and your Serene Highness's House.

'As your Serene Highness was at the same time pleased to generally express yourself on this occasion concerning the succession to the land of the now extinguished House of Saxe-Gotha and Altenburg, and to acquaint me particularly with the steps already taken in this affair by your Serene Highness and the two Agnatic Houses of Saxe-Hildburghausen and Meiningen, I look upon it as a pleasant duty, in return for the valuable confidence reposed in me by your Serene Highness, to lay bare to you, through a confidential communication, the views which his Majesty the Emperor, my Most Gracious Lord, has, after ripe judgment and consideration, taken of this affair.

'His Majesty, the Emperor, is considering the claims of the three courts to the Gotha succession, in every way befitting the existing state of things, under the commonly published patent of the 11th of this month, as this document and its firmly established provisions sufficiently warrant not only the continuance of peace and order, and a settled condition of things in the interior of the suddenly orphaned land but at the same time vouched for an agreeable proof of the careful consideration of those beneficent rules which, according to its spirit, form the basis of the confederate German states.

'It is with real regret that His Majesty the Emperor owns his ability to see but one substantial anomalous rule of measure in the entirely correct line of conduct marked out by His Serene Highness the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, in his recently issued proclamation, which was followed on the 13th inst. by the partly extorted declarations of your Serene Highness and that of my Lord Duke of Saxe-Hildburghausen, and through which the matter has assumed a contentious character which should only be permissible in case it helped towards the settlement of the existing controversy in the form of a resort legitimately referred to, and then only in case of the unexpected non-success of the heartfelt wishes and attendant efforts of the Imperial Court to unite the three Princes concerned in a definite regulation and equalisation of this family matter.

'Concerning the grounds on which His Majesty the Emperor thinks it necessary to regard the latter as such only, and the manner in which it is therefore to be handled, in order to bring about a settlement, I allow myself with all possible curtness to give Your Serene Highness the following information:—As the indivisibility of a hitherto independent territory belonging to the German Confederacy is by no means required and decided by any clause in the act of Confederacy and settlement,—particularly when it is a question, as here, of the revival of the rights of succession of several parties—and as, consequently, the matter of succession in question is, as regards its settlement, in no way hindered from outside by any principle disturbing to the development and consideration

of the sources and stopping point which present themselves, it will therefore come to pass that the present family compact of the Saxe-Gotha line and their stipulations will receive a proper application.

'Now, the task of bringing this about should first of all be the object of negotiations, begun without delay by the three Courts interested, the success of which, notwithstanding the preliminaries which have already pointed to the contrary, may still be hoped for as, in such cases of modality, there are so many according to whom the single demands can be reciprocally equalised, but particularly when the latter adhere to the essential point of view, that an amicable alliance between near relations and members of one and the same ancient and venerable race would, in the eyes of the world, furnish a pleasing and honourable proof of the moderation of German Princes, and, in the real interest of those concerned, will therefore avoid all those accidents which invariably occur, and often contrary to all probability, when the influence of justice is brought to bear on a matter, a negotiation thus fitted for the free expression of the will of the different parties will also show itself to be necessary and useful, if all attempts to bring about an amicable equalisation between the three Courts remain fruitless, for it would then be necessary to investigate the matter, and bring about an understanding at least, by which means the much talked of question of succession would be settled, and a decision arrived at, as to what judicial influence should be brought to bear according to the measures named in Art. 24, of the Settlements Act.

'If, however, such an alliance is not to be arrived at, the principal question in dispute would have to be brought before the Confederate Assembly and left to them, and the proceedings observed which the Confederate and Settlements Act have indicated for quarrels between members of the Confederacy.

'That, in any case, the proviso made by a free alliance of the three Courts must be strictly kept up, as regards the temporal stewardship of the object to be inherited, the conformability of which I have already had the honour of showing, and that the proclamation issued in common by the three

Courts on the 11th of February in the present year has furnished a basis for their provisory possession, to which the decisions of Arts. 19 and 20 of the Settlements Act must be applied, His Majesty the Emperor is so convinced, that he himself by virtue of the duties which you have undertaken to fulfil towards the Confederacy, would take an interest in providing the necessary opening for these principles.

'Whilst flattering myself that Your Serene Highness may find in this explanation of the views of my most high Court a clue to the correct path, I have the honour to be, with the greatest reverence,—Your Serene Highness's obedient Servant,

'METTERNICH.

'*Vienna, Feb* 27, 1825.'

After this letter it was impossible to believe that nearly two years would pass before this affair had been brought to a close.

At length my father united with the Duke of Hildburghausen, in asking for the intervention of the King of Saxony. The Hildburghausen Privy Councillor von Braun travelled to Dresden, to win the King over to act as intervener. In a very amiable letter to the kindred Courts, Frederick Augustus declared his readiness, and after a careful choice of the fitting persons the negotiations proper began in the spring of 1826.

Privy Councillor von Braun, for Coburg and Hildburghausen, was instructed from the beginning that only such interveners could be accepted as were decidedly against the lineal gradual-succession principle. In this way the affair had fallen to Privy Councillor of Justice Schaarschmidt and General von Minckwitz.

When these latter made their first visit to the Court of Meiningen in May 1826, things still appeared in a bad light to them. Three of the proposed plans for the division of the land of Gotha-Altenburg were altogether rejected, and when the Grand-Duke of Weimar came to Meiningen, Freiherr von Kätz informed my father that they had made up their minds there to lay the whole matter before the Confederacy. How-

ever, in July, Duke Bernhard Erich, travelling to Teplitz had met King Frederick William III, and tried, it seems, to win Prussia over to getting the Confederacy to look after the matter. But, as could hardly be doubted, he made a great mistake in expecting Prussia to take any side in a German affair after the outspoken opinion of the Austrian Cabinet.

After Duke Bernhard Erich's return from Teplitz, he showed himself less opposed to the plans of division, and the conferences held in the beginning of August 1826, at Liebenstein, by Councillors Minckwitz, Schaarschmidt, Braun, Carlowitz, Könitz, Wüstemann, Lotz and Fischer, at length rendered possible the forming of a preliminary agreement, which fully contains every principal trait on which rests the present rights of possession of the three Thuringian Dukedoms.

Whilst on the 17th of July 1826, the plans of division still rested on the principle of the surrender of Gotha to Meiningen, Altenburg to Hildburghausen and the extension of Coburg, in the sense of the territory being rounded off through Hildburghausen as far as Saalfeld, a basis of union was suddenly erected, through which the Dukedom of Coburg as such would certainly gain the least.

Its power of endurance was placed in question by its cessions and isolation. My father was indeed Duke of Gotha, and if it had lain more in the German character to give up the more weighty particularistic tendencies sooner and more quickly than was the case, the extension of territory for the new family possession might have made up for the loss of a number of Coburg offices; but as things were, the common administration of Coburg and Gotha did not seem far off. The tangled matter looked as if it would last until my accession, even outlive the great storms of the year 1848, and give rise to endless labour, discord and waste of time.

Although under these circumstances the decision of the question of succession was allied to many inconveniences for my father, and the satisfaction in Coburg itself was not very great, yet he may be said to have been the man who conquered the little territory's opposition; he therefore did not hesitate a moment before ratifying the Liebenstein preliminaries. In

his own way he was already completely filled with the thought of taking possession of Gotha, and receiving the homage of his new subjects with all ceremony. I still well remember the two cold November days on which we journeyed from Coburg to Gotha, my father in front with the Prince of Leiningen, and my brother, myself and Florschuetz in the second carriage. The entire household was also on the move, some preceding, others following us.

We assembled together on the 25th of November, at Siebleben, to form the grand procession which was to enter the new capital.

My father was on horseback, my brother and I drove in an open carriage, drawn by six horses, with the Chamberlain Erffa and Counsellor Florschuetz, whilst a second empty six-horse conveyance followed behind, and the gentlemen of the bed-chamber and courtiers followed in the third and fourth only. Mounted gendarmes preceded the procession, together with all the Post-Office officials and postillions, the young men in office, the volunteers, and the ducal huntsmen. Soldiers and mounted Gendarmes closed the procession, which moved solemnly through the gates of the town towards the castle. It will be easy to imagine the entertainment and festivities, which lasted a whole week in Gotha, and concerning which the foreign newspapers published manifold bits of news. There is a characteristic remark of Perthes', whose words must nowhere fail to be repeated, when my poor father and his entrance into power are in question.

'My monarchical principles,' wrote Frederick Perthes in the year 1826, have gained new followers, for everything suddenly devolves to the new Prince; he is indeed, like King Saul, a head taller than everybody else, is full of princely worth, very well-informed and consequently very popular; he knows everything and takes an interest in everything; everyone is enchanted, and the Napoleonic reasoners, the men of Wartburg and the Republicans of the Greek and Romish authors have acquired a ducally-inclined heart over-night.'

My father produced the same effect in the year 1830, when

as Perthes said, 'everything round showed Gotha cracked and rumbled.'

The Duke at once took the initiative, so as to remedy real injuries and took in hand the necessary changes in state affairs. Thus he could point out how, in 1821, he gave a constitutional government to the Dukedom of Coburg-Saalfeld of his own accord.

The complaints of the Coburgers were not of an intrinsically political nature; their griefs sprung from local causes, which allowed of momentary help with regard to forestry and venery, but which, if further looked into, were connected with questions of right of demesne, which were first regulated and fully carried out much later by me. At any rate, the movement of the year 1830 passed over the Dukedoms without any inner disturbance, and both at home and abroad the Duke increased greatly in popular consideration.

He at least furnished proof that through good and well-regulated administration, a great deal could be done in countries where the population recognise good-will in these matters on the part of the Government, and in this way the most dangerous weapons were wrested from the passionately followed political doctrines and experiments.

In the year 1833 my father associated himself, after long negotiations, which had been going on since the Gotha succession question, with the Dukes of Meiningen and Altenburg, with a view to reviving the ancient order of German probity. Its new foundation was based upon the common rights of all three founders. The Dukes assembled in Gotha on the 25th of December, where the new statutes of the Order were ratified by a solemn act. On the other hand, the possession of Lichtenberg on the Rhine proved itself to be a heavy burden in these disturbed years. My father had continued the negotiations concerning the definite cession of the territory to Prussia in most earnest and honest manner. But it will yet be shown how many difficulties he found and how little he was met half-way in this matter in Berlin.

A lasting settlement of the economical relations of the small states could, of course, be made only after the proposed

endeavours of the years 1815 and 1820, to unite in the departments of commerce and industry had become an actual fact.

The German Confederacy could do nothing in this matter at their Assembly.

The reorganisation of German political economy was accomplished by toll-unions, apart from the States' institutions, on which the Confederacy was based, and the necessities of material intercourse brought the small States into new relations with Prussia.

It must not be supposed that the political bearing of the development of the toll-union apart from the Confederacy, and with the exemption of Austria, was not appreciated, or that the dangers to the States' union arising from it were underrated. But the desire for a total change in the economical relations made it so exceedingly important, that no political consideration could have prevailed against it. Even the Austrian States' Chancellor, who with just eye immediately recognised in the toll-unions the beginning of the end of the German Confederacy, as is seen in his published Memoirs, was entirely incapable of doing anything against this pressure of material unavoidabilities.

My father was by no means inclined to adopt the Prussian toll politics, but he might expect that the union of single territories would be of some use.

The Prussian bureaurocracy, however, treated these matters solely from the point of view of the lion's share. Therefore, it was natural that misunderstandings arose, which I am unable to describe, but concerning which I must not be silent, as they have hitherto found but partial judgment. It was characteristic of the might of Prussian politics in those days, that they did not even want to ask for a road to be made through the forest, without which the Prussian toll-union must become the total ruin of the small Thuringian industries.

Prussia had meanwhile begun to domineer over both intellectual and material interests. As she did not like to rival Austria and the Confederacy politically, and was far

from making concessions to Liberalism itself, she saw with pleasure how the Diet exhausted and wore itself out in police regulations against the invading party—undertakings of a national and republican tendency.

The history of the secret societies of Germany, in 1830-1848 has not yet been written, and is certainly to be formed of material which has the worst historical source. The police reports of the revolutionary societies and assemblies which are to be found in sufficient abundance, cannot be entirely believed, and the partly examined papers of the central commission of inquiry newly appointed on the 20th of June, 1833, have been of but little use.

The secrecy with which trials were carried on, throughout the greater part of Germany, and the fact that in the public courts the accused were generally acquitted, gave birth to a suspicious spirit, to banish which the Government showed themselves absolutely unable. Secretly distributed books and pamphlets, full of the maddest radicalism, were placed in masses in the hands of the people and the young men at the Universities. The decisions of the German Confederacy began therefore to be turned by preference against the Press from the year 1832.

Through the ever deepening effort to stop the baleful influence of these writings by means of preventive measures, the Confederacy saw itself drawn into juridical monstrosities on account of the dissimilarity in the handling of licences, that writings which had been already passed by the censor should be afterwards criminally prosecuted.

As the deliberations of the Confederacy were carried on in a slow and dragging manner, as was natural to it, a new conference of Ministers was called in the summer of 1834 in Vienna, from which proceeded a treatise which embraced sixty articles, and which in any case marked the highest point of the repressive rules, under which Germany suffered for more than ten years.

That the pretended dangers to the state were now to be discovered not only in the revolutionary risings, but in the meetings and representations of the classes was shown in the

prohibition to publish the speeches and business of the House of Representatives.

My and my brother's acquaintance with the official world of Europe happened during this reactionary time. We went away after Easter 1835, immediately after our confirmation, to attend the fifty years' Jubilee of the Grand-Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, who was our grandfather on the mother's side.

On our way thither we spent the first night at Göttingen, in order to visit our countryman Blumenbach, the celebrated naturalist. Arrived in Schwerin, we found a rare crowd of important persons belonging to all the allied German Houses. More than fifty near relations of the old Duke were counted, who had assembled here in beautiful harmony; many amongst them looked not without wonder on that German State, over which the revolutionary storms of the century had passed without leaving a trace behind them, and whose firm, patriarchical condition, as in the Middle Ages, might well fill other princes with envy.

Amongst these assembled princes there were many who promised a glorious future, and some who afterwards really played great parts. My attention was particularly attracted to the Crown Prince of Prussia, who had long had the name amongst the rising generation of being the most extraordinary and intellectual Prince of our times. Everyone spoke of the man who was destined to rule the largest German State.

This clever Crown Prince of Prussia, the learned scientist, the deep thinker and free-minded politician, as he was universally considered, was looked upon by some with uneasy fear on account of the uncertainties of these times of innovation, while his appearance caused others to wonder what the results would be if, after the lapse of a hundred years, another important man at length mounted the throne of Prussia. Thus, and not without the greatest attention, my brother and I too saw the Prince who played a great part in my life, I may even say, with regard to the course of German politics, the greatest part, and whose strange, enigmatical ways, which up to the present day have never been rightly delineated,

were destined to heap so much pain on men singly, as well as on the whole nation.

Frederick William IV was at that time in his forty-first year, and was remarkably corpulent for his age. His fine, intellectual expression, the freshness of his conversation, his ever ready sarcastic remarks could not fail to produce, in young men, like my brother and myself, a degree of enthusiasm for the much courted successor to the throne of Prussia. Added to that, the Crown Prince bestowed unusual attention upon us.

He asked with the greatest amiability about our studies and plans, and appeared well pleased at the happy, confident way in which we young people viewed life. Under the presupposition that we as German Princes would one day make up our minds to help in the improvement of the world and the condition of the Fatherland, he promised us his friendly protection.

He seemed persuaded that it was time to lay the axe to the evils of the time; he could speak fine words about Germany's wants, and showed himself entirely different from all the other Princes in his whole original views on everything.

When the festive days of Schwerin had come to an end, my father thought it proper that we should be introduced at the Court of Berlin. Therefore, whilst we were still staying behind in Schwerin, my father drove first to the Prussian capital, and waited there for us. We received the heartiest reception from Frederick William III, lived at the Castle, and wore the uniform of our officers.

King Frederick still looked very vigorous, and had something winning and fatherly about him. The young people were met on all sides by kindness and friendliness, and our near acquaintance with the Princes of the Prussian House dated from this moment. We then travelled to Dresden, and stayed awhile at the old Court. King Anton and Prince Max still lived entirely in the reminiscences of the preceding century; the latter caused us great astonishment by never wearing any covering on his head.

Our journey then led us to Vienna, where we stopped for several weeks with our uncle Prince Ferdinand. The Emperor Francis had died shortly before, and the moment at which we happened to be there thus appeared all the more important. For, added to the Emperor Ferdinand's ascension of the throne, was the expectation that the Emperor Francis' fixed, absolute system would in some degree be modified. People spoke of the ruler's good nature, and said that the all-powerful Minister would now gain more freedom with which to make good many a plan of action, by means of which, during the past years, Austria's politics had burdened Germany like a mighty mountain.

It was then that I, for the first time, saw Prince Metternich, who had so long been a friend of my father's, and remained in correspondence with him. He was very talkative, and showed a great deal of interest in all the members of our House. He always felt the greatest admiration for our mother.

As further regarded the Austrian Court, we were as frostily received in Vienna as we had been warmly welcomed in Berlin. It is true that of the older Princes, the Archduke Charles had been my guardian since the year 1826, but this relation was no inducement to him to be a little freer. His sons Albert and Frederick stood nearer to us, two princes who passed for the most gifted and promising of all the young Archdukes.

The close unity of the whole system of the Court was remarkable. The different lines of the House were almost like different dynasties, and next came the family of the Archduke Francis Charles, whose clever Bavarian consort brought a fermenting element into the barren Lothringian world, which little by little threw religiously and politically old-fashioned Austria out of order. Before we left Vienna to return to our Austrian hosts we made many an excursion with our cousins to Hungary and Mähren.

Instructive and remarkable as was everything which we saw on this journey, it nevertheless inspired us with less interest than the Congress of Teplitz the same year, at which

we were also present with our father. An event which was to bring guarantees for the principles of stability and alliance of the Eastern Powers to the European States, which had been so deeply shaken since the year 1830.

The great military celebration of fraternisation between Prussia and Russia had just been brought to a close in Kalisch. The Emperor Nicholas wished the new Emperor of Austria to be received into the brotherhood which had just been completed before the whole world, and thus arose the Assembly of Monarchs in Teplitz, where, without being directly invited, almost all the reigning German Princes were present with their sons, to offer their homage to the new Austrian Emperor, and really more principally to the Russian monarch.

One point was clear to the Princes present at Teplitz, that with regard to old Frederick William III and the new Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of Russia held the power completely in his own hands. Some time previously he had conceived the idea of contesting the succession of sickly Ferdinand of Austria, and now that Austrian politics were entirely subordinate, he was remarkably attentive to the new monarch in person, and together with all the other Princes followed the Emperor of Austria to renewed festivities in the Bohemian capital. From that time forth began the Russian ascendency in Germany.

As regards anything personal which occurred to us during the Congress of Teplitz, my first meeting here with the Archduke John may be cited as an interesting reminiscence. This Prince's simple mode of thought, his great learning, his warm sympathy in German affairs singled him out from the other personages whose acquaintance we had made a few months before in Vienna.

How greatly the pressure of the Alliance of the Eastern Powers, or rather Russia's domineering influence reacted on German affairs, was soon shown in Hanover, where the legal consistency of a constitution was cancelled and went unpunished by Confederate jurisdiction.

After the death of King William IV of England and

Hanover, the personal bond between the two lands was loosened, after having lasted 123 years. The peculiar reactions which this bond had produced in the entire political history of Germany ceased. King Ernest Augustus made his entry into Hanover on the 30th of June 1837, and began his reign with an unequalled revolution. The adjournment of the States Assembly on the 3rd of July was followed on the 1st of November by a political stratagem, which, on account of its complete uselessness raised astonishment and horror even in Conservative circles. Only where there was total ignorance of the relations and state of things, particularly in the small German States, could approval of the Hanoverian King's actions be found.

Austria's and Russia's influence in the German Diet might denote a momentary triumph by adoption of the principles of non-intervention; only the more foreseeing amongst the existing generation at once recognised the seed sown in the Hanoverian conflict, and very open speeches were made as to the consequences of the affair.

When the expulsion of the Göttingen seven from the university followed and a personal martyrdom was coupled with the abstract breach of law, the excitement was all the deeper, as these events almost went beyond the pale of politics and touched upon the tender subject of private rights and morals.

If ever the universally wrong and at the same time worn out phrase that a mistake in politics is worse than a crime, ever turned out to be correct, it was in connection with the English Prince's appearance in Germany. The younger generation had no doubt that a mistake as well as a crime lay in the shattering of the constitution of Hanover. In later times this matter has been more quietly and soberly judged, and there have not even failed to be some who grudged the seven poor men of Göttingen, the faded laurels of their former popularity. The Hanoverian breach of constitution was approved of by the German Confederacy, but the impression which this deed made caused the fall of this kingdom, thirty years later, to appear as a just punishment. I myself ex-

pressed my indignation to my uncle, in Brussels, who was of my opinion, in a letter written on the 18th of July, 1837, and running as follows:

'Everyone is full of Hanover and her misfortune, as people freely express it. Every step which has already been taken seems to point to the fact that the new king wishes to overthrow the constitution.

'Popular feeling in Hanover is said to be very much roused. It would really be dreadful if Germany's peace were to be disturbed by such wilful, revolting measures, and if it should be allowed to go so far unpunished that the people would be forced to regain their rights by fighting.'

In Hanover, as in most of the German States, these events were followed by a kind of apathy, to which only the southern territories, particularly Baden, made an exception. Liberalism had been able to develop unhindered in the transactions of the Court there, and found the greatest consideration through the attacks made from Baden on the Confederacy and its decisions. However, whilst in internecine matters monarchical principles particularly met with uneasiness or secret opposition, the Great Powers were almost entirely taken up by the universal European question.

Spain, Portugal and the Orient were the battlefield on which they fought their diplomatic engagements.

Since 1832, Belgium formed the real connecting link in the relation between France and England. If the still unsettled disputes with Holland, and their refusal to recognise the articles of peace drawn up by the London Conference, were to be taken as expressions of the opposition of the Western Powers to those of East Europe, King Leopold's personal and pleasant relations with the Courts of England and France formed an unusual kind of cement.

The alliance between France and England was still regarded at that time as something new and unheard of. Not yet settled and partly in contradiction to the economical and national interests of both lands, this connection therefore needed ever new impulse, new food and new support from their Governments.

The condition of things on the Iberian Peninsula, partially forced Louis Philippe into the system which England had uninterruptedly followed since Canning; but on the other hand, this also gave him many grounds for jealousy. Palmerston could now regard as a splendid prize his success in obtaining the conclusion of the Quadruple Alliance on the 22nd of April 1834. But all after effects of the same depended on whether Spain and Portugal would find the right men to guarantee to the allied States, a firm support against the pretenders and their despotism in the unhappy countries themselves.

England was in this respect luckier in the adoption of measures in Portugal, than Louis Philippe with his protegees in Spain. No wonder, then, that the English Cabinet succeeded with difficulty only in keeping the King of France bound fast to the stakes of the Quadruple Alliance. Palmerston warned and blamed, he prophesied mischief and punishment, if France did not keep closer to the spirit of the agreement, which had not been otherwise looked upon except as a means of driving Don Carlos from Spain.

Meanwhile the Portuguese question had been brought to a happier close, in which King Leopold's hand was also to be recognised. The return of the Emperor Don Pedro to Europe had quickly put an end to Don Miguel's dominion.

After the defeats which his partisans suffered at Santa Maria through General Saldanha, and at Affeiceira through Villaflor on the 18th of February and the 15th of May 1834, Don Miguel was forced to surrender, to resign and to leave the country. He went first to Italy where he denied all his former statements. In after years he settled in Germany, where, by means of intrigues and granting orders he caused himself to be much talked about. The *Chronique Scandaleuse* told the most various stories concerning his relations with the Jesuits.

Although the Miguelists had tried by every means in their power to make the victory of Liberalism in Portugal retrogressive, still Donna Maria succeeded, after Don Pedro's death on the 24th of September 1834, in tightly grasping the

reins of power in her hand, and her first marriage with the Duke of Leuchtenberg promised a happy solution of all difficulties. Unluckily, however, the Prince died three months after his marriage.

In later years I learned to know Donna Maria personally, and looked upon her as the most prominent woman of our times. But in 1835 I still felt very little interest in the dangerous struggles of a far-off land, whence an Embassy Extraordinary, with Count Lavradio, afterwards Minister and Leader of the Liberal party, came to Coburg, to marry my cousin Ferdinand to the young Queen of Portugal, who seemed unfortunate in more than one respect. My uncle Ferdinand's whole family had already come to Coburg in the autumn, with the object of settling the business matters under my father's directions. On the 6th of December 1835 Stockmar and Minister von Carlowitz drew up the contract of marriage with the Portuguese Plenipotentiaries, and the marriage took place by proxy in January.

We young people parted from our loved and talented kinsman and comrade not without anxiety, when we prepared in the spring for the journey to the land which then appeared so extraordinarily far off, and where, on the 9th of April, the marriage with Donna Maria was to be celebrated at Lisbon. This matter had doubtless been brought to pass by Lord Palmerston, whilst Louis Philippe had tried to make the Duc de Nemours the successful candidate.

My uncle Ferdinand himself had not been easily won over to the project. But his son was more fitted for the difficult position through his many gifts and great knowledge than any other of the German Princes.

His father accompanied him to Lisbon by way of Brussels and London, at which Courts the Prince was shown royal honours much to the displeasure of many German diplomates. He was followed to Portugal by his former governor, an excellent German, a Coburger of the name of Dietz, who afterwards earned the highest merit by his part in the settling of affairs in Lisbon, and who was especially clever in bringing about the best terms between Donna Maria and her consort.

Whoever visited Portugal in after years received most of all the impression that our House has become at home in the proper sense of the word. According to the constitutional custom of Portugal the Prince Consort assumed the title of King, after the edge of all intrigues against my cousin had been dulled by the birth of a royal Prince on the 16th of September 1837.

If the fortification of Donna Maria's throne was not decidedly attained during the next few years, the cause lay to a great degree in the condition of the neighbouring kingdom of Spain, where the principles of the Quadruple Alliance had, as already remarked above, been much less deeply implanted through France's uncertain attitude, than might have been desired. As the question of Spain's peace likewise depended later upon the bringing about of a marriage in which the House of Coburg was involved, I shall refer very frequently to the state of things in the Iberian peninsula.

Meanwhile the Oriental question of the Allies of 1834, whose union, as has been seen, never stood on a very firm foundation, became more and more divided. As I must here touch upon Oriental affairs, even if only superficially, in order to explain the differences between the Western Powers, it will be allowable to go back to the events which had meantime occurred in Greece, as my recollections, and the documents which now lie before me call up a list of circumstances which have hitherto been completely ignored. They show how much trouble my uncle still gave himself, even after his resignation of the Greek kingdom, to help in these matters, and bring about the well-being of Greece.

After the murder of President Capodistrias on the 9th of October 1831, the greatest anarchy reigned in Greece, and it appeared as if the state laboriously erected by European statesmen must fall again.

The friends of Greece, in Germany, England and France, feared they would be driven to despair over their work, as it was quite impossible to succeed in satisfying the strong monarchical tendencies of the nation by raising a throne. A sort of continual complaint appeared to be made against my

uncle by the course taken by Greek affairs, through his having refused a position for which he seemed more fitted than any other Prince. The enduring interest which he fostered for Greek concerns caused him fits of remorse, and he was continually busied in trying to find a substitute. At the same time, with rare conviction, he held fast to the principles which he looked upon as absolutely necessary to the existence of the new state, and on the acceptance of which he looked upon the whole matter as dependent. It was thus that the thought occurred to him of bringing forward his own brother, my father, as a candidate for the Greek throne, and for this purpose he opened negotiations with the English and French Governments.

As Capodistria's brother Count Augustin could not succeed in being fully recognised as his successor in the Presidency, and could utter nothing but complaints to Eynard and Palmerston of his burdensome task, seeking, on the other hand, with ill judged haste, the most partial dependence on Russia, the choice of a king was very important to the two Western Powers, as it had become a life and death question of their political position in the Orient.

King Leopold seized this moment with the right perception, that under this condition of affairs it might more easily be possible to induce the Western Powers to grant him concessions for a fresh candidate, which had been refused to himself two years before.

It is certainly very worthy of notice, that on the 21st of January, 1832, he expressed his sorrow to my father, that an improvement in the boundary lines of Greece had not been granted him, otherwise he would have been there. My father also had from the first moment of the negotiations exacted the boundary lines for the new state which King Leopold had demanded. Besides this, it was at that time hoped that the Ionian Islands would be given up to Greece, a present due to England's generosity, which would have uncommonly lightened the King's position.

It is not to be doubted that the Western Powers may have been frightened back by the slow progress of the negotiations

with my father; for when the latter sent his final conditions to King Leopold, King Louis of Bavaria had already completed an agreement for his son Otto. But the London Protocol of the 13th of February, 1832, offering the Greek throne to Prince Otto of Bavaria, vouched for none of all the things which my uncle and my father had looked upon as necessary, and therefore it would not perhaps be quite just to say that the King of Bavaria had shown great foresight in the carrying out of this matter.

If one now reads the documentary reports of the transactions between King Leopold and my father, and notices that they conducted themselves quite strictly at the time towards Bavaria, one will be forced to acknowledge that King Louis was in a great hurry with the matter. It is true that, as is to be seen from the published letters of Thiersch, he would not acknowledge it to his friends. However, when one reads in his biography that the expulsion of his son from Greece had wounded him more than any other stroke of fortune, it may be inferred without question that the royal old man must to a certain degree have stood his own accuser. Yet he had depreciated the great care which my father and my uncle took in this matter, at the founding of the new kingdom, and exhausted his own fortune as well as that of his country in order to bring about the election of his son, even under less favourable conditions.

Only a few months after Otto and his Bavarian officers and advisers had arrived in Greece, it was complained that the just claims to the natural bounding of Hellenic territory had been left unfulfilled, and had even robbed the future Greek state of its islands. Everyone tried to point to an endeavour to bind the efficacy of Hellenism within the circle of Bavarian guardianship. With all this England found as great difficulty in pushing her modest claims with the Porte, as if the latter had taken equally grave and decisive steps towards the welfare of Greece.

The head boundary of the new state was only recognised by Turkey on the 22nd of November, 1834, and then only because of the most immediate threats.

Meanwhile Russian influence had been successful against

the Western Powers, and there ensued the diplomatic play of an endless struggle between England and Russia for the protectorate of the fallen Porte.

A growing strangeness also came between France and England, as Mehemed Ali's Egyptian Kingdom began through the Treaty of Kutahin (6th May, 1837) to extend its dominion over Syria, if only in the form of a feudal tenure.

The English Cabinet were now supported by Louis Philippe in their opposition to the Russian arrangements of Hunkiar Skelessi, although it would affect the conflicting interests of France if turned against the Egyptian ideas of the Great Powers.

In these contradictions lay the difficulty which made the Oriental question appear to the diplomates of the fourth decade in the light of an inextricable tangle.

The old traditions of France pointed to Egypt as the point at which all French influences must work, if she was to keep any place at all in the Orient, and every English interest hindered the rising of a powerful state which would rule the road to India. The foregoing events and occurrences which took place with reference to these matters for half a century, incessantly demanded such careful preludes, and consequently went at so slow a pace, that the contemporaries were sometimes convinced that the great question was stagnating.

The fact is, however, that in the whole history of the polities of the European states during the past and present generations, no event had occurred through which the Powers have worked upon the whole mass of party questions of each nation in such an equal and conclusive manner.

When in 1840 it looked as if the die were being cast by the Rhine and the Bosphorus to decide Syria's fate, the connection between these political matters remained almost incomprehensible to our nation.

The lightly slumbering feeling of opposition between the German and French peoples now awoke with renewed strength and gave rise to a rumour of war which was happily only a rumour, but which, however, exercised an influence on the national consciousness which will be spoken of later on.

CHAPTER III

PRINCES ERNEST AND ALBERT START ON THEIR TRAVELS.—THEIR MUTUAL AFFECTION.—VISIT ENGLAND.—THIS VISIT NO BEARING ON THE SUBSEQUENT ENGLISH MARRIAGE.—WILLIAM IV ANTAGONISTIC TO THE MATCH.—PRINCE ALEXANDER OF THE NETHERLANDS.—MEETING WITH DISRAELI.—PARIS.—AMIABILITY OF LOUIS PHILIPPE AND THE ORLEANS FAMILY.—ATTEMPT TO MARRY PRINCE ERNEST TO PRINCESS CLEMENTINA ABANDONED ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS.—BRUSSELS.—THE TWO PRINCES' STUDIES ARRANGED BY KING LEOPOLD.—QUETELET.—HIS AFTER INFLUENCE ON PRINCE ALBERT.—MILITARY STUDIES.—THE CARBONARI.—ARRIVABENE.—SILVIO PELLICO.—OBJECTIONS OF THE GERMAN FAMILIES TO THE PRINCES' UNIVERSITY CAREER.—STUDENT LIFE AT BONN.—WINS A SWORD.—FICHTE, PERTHES, SCHLEGEL, ETC.—PARTING OF THE BROTHERS.—PRINCE ALBERT TO WINTER IN ITALY.—PRINCE ERNEST ENTERS THE SAXON SERVICE.—DRESDEN.—LIFE AT THE SAXON COURT.—SAXON POPULACE UNPREPOSSESSING.—TIECK, THE DEVRIENTS, SCHRÖDER.—PRINCE ERNEST COMES OF AGE.—PRINCE ALBERT DECLARED OF AGE AT THE SAME TIME BY SPECIAL ACT.—HUMOROUS INCIDENT AT THE SOLEMNITY.

In May 1836, began the years of apprenticeship and travelling of my brother's life and mine.

Our being thrown together during this period of freer development, depending upon each other, following the same studies, and dividing the joys and sorrows of youth, became for both of us a source of mental and moral riches and assured us a mutual understanding which was to last during our whole lives. We had seen and experienced much concerning the political and scientific world, which served to awaken in us a desire for more solid education. Yet in what way this want was to be supplied at a time when the sons of reigning heads were rarely sent to a university, it was difficult to say. We therefore decided to adopt my uncle's view of the matter,

as he had proposed a stay in Brussels, where we would have the best tutors and all the advantages of a life in the great world. I venture to tell the reader something more particularly of these reminiscences in respect of this epoch of my life, as I wish at the same time to furnish a better understanding of my brother and his education than has up to the present been possible in any published work.

The moment seemed no unimportant one to us in which we left our home for a long time, to go out into the world, more independent than we had hitherto been. Accompanied by our father, we went at once to Holland, where we visited Amsterdam, Leyden, and the Hague, and embarked at Rotterdam for England. My father and my uncle may on their side have had another object in view of which I must speak here, as by most of the works of history which treat of my brother's subsequent marriage with Queen Victoria, a too immediate reason for our stay in England at that time has been attributed.

It is possible that my uncle may have clung to his favourite idea, that the heiress to the English throne should marry one of his nephews. Meanwhile, in the year 1836, these plans met with decided opposition on the part of King William IV, who was not favourably impressed with the Coburg proposition, and had rather turned his thoughts to the Netherlands Prince Alexander, as a husband for his niece.

When he heard of our journey he arranged for Prince Alexander to come to Windsor with his brother, then Prince of Orange and now King of the Netherlands.

Thus our stay in London was without any significance whatever as far as concerned the question which later became so important, and the first meeting between the two cousins who afterwards made the most admired marriage of the whole world, was hardly marked by any deeper feeling. We had fixed our attention solely upon everything which London offered us, and which makes old England appear so peculiar to the inhabitants of the Continent. We went everywhere unaccompanied and lived in Kensington with our aunt, in whose house German was not usually spoken. We thus felt the wish as well as the necessity of making the English

language our own. We had been commanded to Windsor for one day only, by King William IV, and could boast of no particular attention on his part. On the other hand, Queen Adelaide, born a Princess of Meiningen, showed us the utmost friendliness, which was of great use to us in later years.

The King was already sickly at that time, and I remember that he fell fast asleep during dinner. He impressed one as being a thorough sailor, unimportant in all other respects. As we received many invitations from the Ministers and other prominent persons, our visit may be looked upon as a preparation for our later relationship with England.

On this occasion I met Disraeli, whose rising fame as author, speaker and Minister at that time filled the world with ever increasing wonder. At this period he produced the impression of a vain young Jew, of remarkably radical tendencies. The time came later when he understood how to make calculated use of the Conservative Tories. He carried his left arm in a black sling, which peculiarity was sneered at by his enemies, who said that he only did it in order to make himself interesting, as he had never suffered any accident which rendered it necessary. He seemed to belong to the class of men who have made up their minds to play a great part, and who are certain to gain the end in view.

We came into contact with Lords Grosvenor, Claude Hamilton, and Westminster, of whom the latter had been acquainted with my father at the time of the great wars; neither did we seek in vain for an opportunity of seeing and knowing the Iron Marshal Lord Wellington. Amongst other military men in London society, we found Captain Marryat at the height of his popularity as a novelist; his works were then in everybody's hands.

We had ourselves to thank for all these acquaintances, for our aunt the Duchess of Kent lived a very retired life, and went little into society; our cousin Victoria had not yet been introduced into the great world, whereas we were allowed to accept all the invitations of the season.

If English society with all its great formality had an almost depressing effect on our youthful minds, Paris and the

House of Orleans, on the other hand, made almost too fascinating an impression upon us. Although we were not guests at the Court, the old King treated us with the most perfect kindness and amiability. I may say that a kind of sympathy arose between him and me, such as may be imagined between a youth and a man standing on the threshold of old age.

He was a perfect master of the German language, and could even speak the dialects of the different countries. I particularly remember the zeal and pleasure with which he showed us the plans for his great Versailles museum. His inclination to relate, to explain and to instruct had something uncommonly pleasant about it, something simple and stimulating, and many years later I recognised the debt I owed this experienced man for many a bit of knowledge concerning matters which I should otherwise have had no means of acquiring.

We also learned to know Louis Philippe's sons, Joinville, who was just my age, and the younger Aumale. The Duke of Orleans, who soon afterwards married my cousin, Helena of Mecklenburg, was at that time in Africa.

The family life of the whole Court had something so homelike and attractive, that it made the most beneficial impression upon my brother and myself.

I was not at that time aware, however, that the idea had occurred to marry me to the Princess Clementina. A few months after this my first stay in Paris, my uncle Leopold asked me if the Princess Clementina did not please me, and whoever knew her will understand that I could only answer in the affirmative. The thought of entering into such relationship with the Family of Orleans would have had something especially attractive to me. But one consideration availed at the French Court, which might well have been unexpected on account of the King's well-known liberality of sentiments as regarded religious and confessional matters, and must on that account be mentioned.

It was looked upon as inadmissible for a member of the French House to adopt the evangelical belief. Now, this ought not to have raised any barrier to a union between

myself and the Princess Clementina, as, with regard to religious questions, I possessed a far-reaching idea of the right of individual feeling. It was hinted, that in case of a mixed marriage, the King would have to demand for his daughter that the female offspring, at least, should be brought up in the faith of the French Court. The matter thus fell through. The Princess Clementina, to whom I shall again refer later on, married my cousin Augustus, in the year 1843, and I remained single many years, without any other cares than those imposed upon me by the pursuit of my own ideals in life.

In June 1836, we arrived in Brussels and proceeded to make ourselves at home. No more charming and fitting life can be imagined as a means of reaching the goal of a development as free as it was intense. Nothing disturbed us, everything seemed formed to help us to gain the end in view. We kept house on our own account, and occupied a cosy little villa, with a garden, situated in the Boulevard de L'Observation. Here it was possible for us to enjoy comprehensive intercourse with home and foreign scientists and politicians, and by special desire of the King the society of a select circle which deserves a more particular description. As regarded our studies, King Leopold had set us the task of preparing for life, and of obtaining at the same time an introduction to the graver studies at the University. Our old tutor Counsellor Florschuetz was ever by our side, like a true mentor. Baron Wichmann was specially assigned to us for all outside matters, a worthy and experienced man, the choice of whom for the position had been happily made. He had belonged to the German English Legion, and had taken part under Wellington in the Spanish campaigns and the battle of Waterloo, was a thoroughly unprejudiced man and much loved in Brussels society.

The most prominent of our tutors was Quételet, with whom we remained in communication during our whole lives. If it were not otherwise well-known, my uncle's great knowledge of mankind would have been impressed upon me by the fact that he chose this man as our leader, a man of whom

mathematicians, astronomers, philosophers, and statisticians had an equally high opinion, and who, a king in the way of theoretical learning, was at the same time possessor of great experience in the practical questions of states administration.

Quételet's wonderfully extensive knowledge made it appear possible to our uncle to give us an encyclopædic course of instruction in the most varied branches. This, however, would have far overstepped the boundary line of what was attainable by young men in so short a space of time. Quételet therefore fixed our attention more on mathematics and statistics, in order to lay a preparatory foundation for further study of political science. The application of the rule of probabilities concerning the questions of political economy, then just adopted, was one of the things which particularly made so great an impression on us, as on all the world, and it may be added that Quételet's influence over my brother in this respect was one which formed his whole manner of viewing the world. During his entire lifetime he preserved the statistically mechanical grasp of social and political questions, and in more than one of his speeches and works of later years I was reminded of the deep observations and lectures which we had heard from Quételet in Brussels.

Thus Quételet had full right to address himself to my brother in the dedication of his celebrated book: 'Du Système Social et des Lois qui le Régissent,' for it would have been impossible to place a more enthusiastic adherent to this doctrine at the beginning of the work.

What I, for my part, intensely admired in Quételet was his wide comprehension, his really free mode of thought and his amiable manner of imparting learning. He introduced us to every man of importance then living in Brussels; a number of Belgian and foreign scholars and statesmen assembled in our drawing-rooms. Here we learned to know President Gerlache, who had stood at the head of the deputations when the crown was offered to my uncle. Although this excellent man was a strict ultramontane as befitted his position in his party, he enjoyed the most unlimited esteem. His scientific prominence and the consideration which his nomination as

President of the Academy and the Belgian Commission for the *Monuments Historiques* gave him, lifted him beyond the reach of all personal attacks.

Our intercourse with the two Brouckères was also of the greatest interest, and exceedingly instructive. The elder, Charles, was, as is known, Minister for a time, and was much thought of by my uncle. As he was theoretically as well as practically versed in finance affairs, and a master of national economy, when he left the Ministry he held lectures at the University. His younger brother Henry was more deeply involved in the party strife of the day, and when we were in Brussels, he was already considered one of the most capable Liberal leaders. King Leopold made a great deal of him, but it was against his principles to take any immediate part in parliamentary disputes. He often said jestingly: 'that he was married to neither of the two ever strengthening national parties.' It would be too much for me to recall all the interesting persons whom we knew in Brussels. I will only mention de Weyrs, de Vaux, and Van Praet, the last of whom was the King's Cabinet Secretary. Amongst foreigners I will point out Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, who, then just beginning his career as a Diplomate, was in Brussels as Secretary to the Legation, and who was sent thence immediately to Constantinople, where he found more room to exercise his great talents.

According to my uncle's plans, our knowledge of languages was to be perfected by these chosen surroundings; we received besides special lessons in French and English from Professor Bergerou and Lord Byron's former playmate, the English clergyman Mr Drury, who was himself a poet, and gave most stimulating lectures on English Literature.

Brussels had, through King Leopold, received an impulse in every way favourable to painting. De Keyser and Gallait made their appearance. We diligently visited the studios of the most celebrated painters, and Wappers and Madou allowed us to paint and draw under their direction. My brother, who was known to have much talent for this art, imbibed here the impressions which fitted him later for so fruitfully influencing art life in England.

Besides this, King Leopold did not forget to give us a military education befitting our position. We worked at gunnery with Colonel Borman, the well-known improver of the Shrapnel gun, and clever military writer, who had belonged to the Saxon army. We visited the camp twice; for as the King of Holland had not decided to sign the treaty of London, the Dutch and Belgian armies still stood on a war footing. The Dutch army lay near Maestricht, the Belgian in barracks on the heath of Beverloo. Although neither side thought of renewing the war, yet the unusual situation had the effect of making military matters more seriously looked after, than in an ordinary exercising camp.

I was acting as General Staff Officer to Magnan, afterwards a French Marshal, and my brother fulfilled the same duties for General Kutalsk. A man was, however, assigned to instruct me specially who filled one with unusual interest. He was the well known Polish General Prodzinsky, then a colonel on the general staff, one of the most well informed men whom I ever met. Of course he told me all sorts of things about his Polish experiences, and an immediate view was opened to me of relations and conditions which I should never have come to know without him, who grew to be a true friend to me.

As will be already concluded, we were in no way guarded from the current of public events and affairs by the wise and careful King. We had intercourse with men of all colours and aims, even the entrance to the remarkable house near Brussels was not forbidden us, where the fugitives from Italy and the Carbonari discharged from prison formerly led a quiet life of waiting. I have a lively remembrance of those fugitive oath-takers, who were mentioned at many Courts only with a kind of horror, yet who were so humane and so perfectly modest in their conversation, or looked ill, like the much pitied poet, whose verses, as they said, did more harm to the Austrian Government than a whole army. Next to the Marchese Arconati, the learned Count Arrivabene and Berger, Silvio Pellico naturally excited our interest the most. He had not come to Brussels to make a long stay, but was visiting

Arrivabene at the same time we were there, Arrivabene being the central rallying point of the Carbonari.

It can no longer be understood how much this unlimited intercourse meant to two German sons of a prince in those days, and what an effect was produced in Germany by an education and bringing up such as King Leopold gave us in his residence.

The diplomatic corps in Brussels must surely have had a great deal of news to write concerning the royal nephews! But we ourselves, as may be imagined, had not at that time the slightest idea that there might be anything questionable in our management; nevertheless, it was not very long before we began to perceive more and more clearly that our entire stay in Brussels had made a highly doubtful, even a most bad impression on the different families in Germany.

I know of no other particulars to relate, yet I distinctly remember that at more than one meeting with other German princes, we noticed a certain coldness in their manner, as if they wished to keep away from us or thrust us off. My brother's indignation at this often reached a very high point. He could be irritated to the utmost pitch by such stiffness on the part of German princes, and would give reins to his talent for making the weaknesses of others ludicrous.

Through this unjust judgment we saw ourselves only all the more surely forced into opposition against them, and were convinced that we should not go far if we depended upon these antiquated and decayed principles. One was, so to speak, pushed into the ranks of reform, hardly being given any choice, and, if one had thought over matters in English, the well-known words would exactly have described the situation: 'I did not go over from the Tories to the Whigs, but when I awoke and looked about me I found myself a Whig.'

How good and lucky it is that the beliefs of youth are disturbed by no presentiment that in both one and the other of life's paths, but few disappointments are spared us.

Meanwhile our stay in Brussels was drawing to a close, and we counted up, not without satisfaction and some self-

consciousness, the sum of intellectual winnings, which so much social, political, and scientific stimulation had given us. We were of the conviction that a course of study such as is peculiar to the German universities, is to be replaced in no other way. Thus we had soon planned to induce our uncle to gain permission from our father for us to make such a stay. Meantime there were very many difficulties attendant on this, as the Head of no reigning House would be too willing to see his sons allowed to follow a public course of study at a university.

At length it was settled that we should go to Bonn for three semestres, as Jena and Göttingen, upon which we had also reflected, appeared less advantageous. So we left Brussels in April 1837, made first a visit to the Court in Berlin, and then hastened with the ecstacy of novices in the way of a university, to Alma Mater of Bonn, that creation of Frederick William III, which was then in its full bloom.

Like the flag at the head of the tall staff, shone to us the name of the old singer of the war of freedom, and one of our first visits was made to Ernest Moritz Arndt, who, though he no longer worked as a teacher, still formed a central point for all freethinking and patriotic men.

The old gentleman always treated us with much tenderness, and dedicated some verses to me and my brother.

On the 3rd of May 1837 we were duly matriculated under the Rectorate of Wilhelm Wutzer, and then began a never-to-be-forgotten time, which our friend and comrade in study, Prince William Löwenstein has charmingly described, particularly from a humorous point of view, in his history of Prince Albert. And, indeed, there was no lack of jovial events in the youthful circle to which, besides Prince Löwenstein, belonged the three cousins Henckel-Donnersmark, Count Erbach, the later Minister of Baden, von Sternberg, the future head of the Imperial Cabinet in Berlin, von Wilmovsky, the poet Jäger, and many others. In the summer we made many excursions, in the winter we rode and fenced diligently, and on the 17th of March 1838, after a great trial of fencing I carried away a sword as an honorary distinction and a diploma for proven expertness with the foils, which I have to this day.

With all our conviviality we were all nevertheless very diligent and possessed of a kind of reading rage, which caused us to devour a huge quantity of books, thereby satisfying a kind of rival ambition. The numerous lectures, most of which we attended quite privately, were taken down in our beloved notebooks and gone over with the greatest conscientiousness. Some of the professors, particularly Fichte, usually had conversaziones, in which there was a great deal of ardent discussion. We attended nearly the entire cycle of lectures of the law faculty, which prepared students for state service, Bethmann-Hollweg, Nissen, Gärtner, Perthes and Walter; besides this, we attended Kaufmann for the science of financing, Fichte for philosophy, Löbell for history, Schlegel for literature, Alten for the history of art, and Lasson for French literature.

We also dipped into anatomy with Wurzer and natural sciences with Nöggerath and Rehfuss. We took lessons in music with Professor Breitenstein, and occupied ourselves not only with the historical branches of this art but also with thorough bass.

I do not wish, by this long account of our stay at college, to give the impression that it was our intention to attempt to obtain a professional education. The habits of our German universities are well enough known for the reader to be able to judge of their best influence in the way of producing a general fund of knowledge and mental stimulation. The having moved for a few semestres in the peculiar atmosphere of this ideal world without constraint and, as far as was possible, without having to think of practical matters, was without doubt the time which we more rightly prized than all others.

The easy intercourse with men of all shades of opinion and tendencies, the esteem in which mental capability alone is held, the unsparing strife of opinion in this imaginary republic, all worked upon us with an unequalled power of attraction. We entered into real bonds of friendship with some of the professors, which was rendered all the more hearty by the many ludicrous peculiarities attendant on the

learned world of Germany. This reminds me first of all of the excellent Fichte, with whom we zealously philosophised.

He was at that time a man between thirty and forty years of age, and suffered in many circles from the fact that he was looked upon only as the son of his father. His outward appearance and manner of lecturing gave the students opportunities for many jokes. He was incredibly awkward in the society of others, but when once he began to talk, his mental powers had the most attractive effect, and silenced all the derision of his youthful revilers. But we adhered all the more closely to him, and as his lectures were so planned for us that we might sometimes talk with him, state a thesis or enter into discussion, we looked forward to the next lesson as soon as the last one was over.

Our position with regard to Perthes was a peculiar one. As is known, he was the son of our friend in Gotha, and it was only natural that we should allow ourselves to treat him rather as a countryman. Now he was the representation of a doctrine which differed intrinsically from the honestly natural mode of thought of former times, and which smacked strongly of a kind of piousness which was quite new to us.

As concerns the latter point of view, I will not deny, that the lectures of many of the professors, amongst whom I will particularly mention Walter, produced an astonishingly conservative, even reactionary impression on us. It seemed to us as if we, the descendants of an ancient race, whose forefathers had so carefully protected their God-given rights, were at bottom much more liberal than the completely *forefatherless* professors, who at that period were very zealous against radicalism. This gave rise to many laughable scenes.

Perthes had during his lectures on states rights, dwelt with a comprehensive chapter on God's grace, during which we frequently interrupted him with half-loud exclamations. But when he expressed a fine conviction of the God-sent extraction of certain state institutions, we intimated to his great vexation that it was quite impossible for us to take this home, set down in black and white in our note-book.

The pattern of dialectically brilliant eloquence who shone

brighter than all the star professors was old A. W. Schlegel, whom we also learned to know, and in whose house we shared in the seldom attained pleasure of hearing him read Shakespeare. His clever and brilliant delivery made one forget his incredibly senile manner and problematical character. His delineation in his 'History of Literature' of modern German poetry since Schiller, in which he enlarged particularly on the romantic style, forms one of the most unfading impressions which I ever received. These lectures were public, and immensely sought after. My brother and I attended them like other students, and were looked upon as such by everyone. On the other hand, during the later half-years of our stay at Bonn, other princes belonging to reigning thrones came there, who exacted the ceremony due to their rank, and had thus to deal with many difficulties attendant on their taking part in the public lectures. This was the case at the University with the later Grand-Duke of Mecklenburg, and the then Hereditary Prince of Lippe Bückeburg. When he first intimated that he would be present at Schlegel's lecture, a chair was set apart, and looked after by the beadle. When the unconscious Prince entered the room, a soft murmur arose. When the Professor opened his address by solemnly welcoming the Hereditary Grand-Duke, and then turned to the rest of the audience, an unexampled uproar ensued, so that Schlegel had trouble in making himself heard.

The three half-years at Bonn passed by thus quickly. During the vacation we made many excursions. In the autumn of 1837, we went by way of Strasbourg to Switzerland, over which we wandered in every direction, and mostly on foot. We climbed the Alps for the first time through the Simplon pass, visited Milan and the upper Italian lakes, and on the 12th of December we entered Venice. At the end of the following year at the University, I was to separate from my brother, and the earnest duties of life pointed out to each of us his particular path.

When we parted with much grief we promised each other to remain true friends as we had always been, and kept this promise until relentless death came between us.

In the preceding March, during a visit to Brussels, a remarkable conversation had taken place between King Leopold and my brother, which was decisive for Albert's future. For the first time the English marriage was seriously spoken of. Nevertheless it was decided that my brother should spend the next winter in Italy, whereas I was to enter the Saxon military service in Dresden.

Although I had had the intention of spending one or two half-years more, at one of the large universities, yet it was hardly pleasant to me when my father insisted this time upon my going to Jena, it being the cradle of our home knowledge. As this brought about the entire defeat of all my plans of studies, the question arose which army I was to enter. I urgently desired to be received into Prussian service, but my father, on the contrary, was more inclined by family tradition for the Austrian army. His objections to Berlin were not so much political as economical, as he imagined that my stay there would be very expensive on account of my relations with the Prussian Princes.

As regarded my entering the Austrian service, my father hoped that I would be given the rank of a cavalry captain, and I was much pleased when a negative and almost cold answer came, for the prospect of thinking over what I had seen during several years in Europe's most blooming countries, whilst I sat in some Bohemian or Hungarian village, was remarkably unattractive, quite apart from the fact that opinions I had formed through contact with the world, were little in harmony with the Austria of those days. Under these circumstances I was forced to seek my military career in the Saxon army, where I was received with the utmost willingness as a captain in the King's regiment of Mounted Guards. I was especially lucky in being stationed in Dresden, where everything made me think that I should find a welcome continuation to my visit in Brussels. My personal relations alone were of the most pleasant description. King Frederick Augustus received me in the most affectionate manner, like a fatherly friend. I was at once drawn into the immediate

circle of this noble and highly educated family, and treated like a son and companion of long date.

Life at the Posen Court made an unlimited and beneficial impression upon me. There ruled in everything a higher tone of manner, the keynote to which was given by the excellent King. His beautiful interest for botany, his travels and his talent as a landscape painter lent a peculiar charm to his society.

Monosyllabic as he was in ordinary intercourse, when there were affairs to be settled, he could relate his wanderings heartily and gaily in private company. He had just spent the past spring in the Saxon Alps, a locality seldom visited by tourists, and was full of the impressions made upon him by the Dalmatian towns and the Montenegrin mountains. He was unequalled as a describer of nature, and one never left him without having learned something from him.

Prince John was not behind the King in mental acquirements. But his studies were known to lie in another direction, and had at an early date led him into a special form of learning, which gave the so far elder man a double superiority over me. If one had been desirous to show one's self entirely and openly to him, with his nature, more than with other men, it would have been necessary to possess a fund of greater and more positive knowledge of his school and tendencies.

Even if the Prince's thoroughly noble mind prevented his ever bringing his want of church tendencies and religious opinions into prominence when with those who were not of the same mind as he, yet a certain religious feeling was inseparably mingled with his historical studies. He expected an affectionate understanding of this turn of mind, which belonged rather to the middle ages, and shrank from the contact of freethought, which formerly often assumed a character of frivolous superficiality.

As he wished to see all human education stamped with solid positivism, he was particular to procure the most careful teaching for his young sons, on whom rested many hopes. Besides this, they were brought up in a manner which was simple and unassuming, in the best sense of the words.

Although he often gained real triumphs as a speaker in the House, and was an excellent lawyer, sometimes in the political and legislative questions of the time, sometimes in opposition to the Government propositions, he still found it necessary to apply himself incessantly to his scientific studies. At the time of my stay he was occupied in completing for publication his translation of a commentary on the *Divina Commedia*. He often read aloud parts of the poem, and interpreted to a chosen crowd of listeners difficult passages, and the whole plan of Dante's work, of the general scope of which he was indeed the most fitting exponent.

The intimate family harmony was particularly added to by its amiable feminine members. Queen Marie and Princess Johanna exercised a kind of witchcraft over the whole Court, which revered their intense refinement of customs. I need only mention the King's sister, the Princess Amalia. Many of her literary productions belong to the best and most pleasing efforts of literature of the day, and it was but right that her daily notes should have been lately gathered together, and care taken that the German lady, who, with so disadvantageous an exterior, knew how to place herself on a level with the most eagerly read authoresses of France, should not sink too quickly into oblivion. One cannot help being surprised that the everyday life at the Saxon Court, which, in its then learned state reminded one of the times of the Renaissance, has never yet found a mention in history.

The political relations of Saxony had undergone an agreeable change since the revolutionary events of the thirtieth year, a state of things which was owing to the unequalled activity of Frederick Augustus. Many improvements were made during the first years of the co-regency, in judicature and scholarship. When old King Anton died, in the year 1836, Frederick Augustus was free to choose his advisers, and tried to work for the lasting material growth of his kingdom.

During these years was formed the trustworthy administration which worked long after the close of the King's lifetime. I was personally acquainted with most of those statesmen, who, like von Wietersheim, Zeschau and Carlowitz,

deserved many thanks from Saxony for their help in establishing a firm administration, and I gained many an insight into the arrangements made by them, which were afterwards of use in my Government.

In spite of the well-ordered state of the country, there was no good feeling amongst the great mass of people. In Dresden I particularly noticed a roughness of mind which one might have called democratic in the bad sense of the word, and which gave me an idea of a state of things which ten years later filled many with astonishment, for the very reason that few would have thought Saxons capable of it.

A spirit all the better in comparison ruled the Saxon army in the year 1840. The body of officers in my regiment were of unequalled honour; the closest comradeship bound them together, and the refined tone which made social intercourse pleasant with each member, was probably also owing to the fact that many officers had married highly-educated wives.

I had my own house in Dresden, and was free to receive the officers of my regiment as well as many other persons in the most varied positions and circles. Chamberlain von Loewenfels was my Court Marshal, and accompanied me on the journeys of which I shall speak later on.

My love of art, towards which Dresden contributed so much, was furthered by a particular circumstance. My former Chief of the Squadron, Baron von Mangold, was a painter and very fond of amateur occupation with palette and brush. Many an hour of service time was spent in art work or in some gallery. The Dresden art exhibitions also offered a great stimulant.

I saw a great deal of Haufstängel, the publisher of the Dresden gallery, and of Bendemann, who was painting the frescoes in the Castle.

If I had to depict the intellectual life of which Dresden was then the central point, I would prefer to stop at the circle which assembled around Tieck; here I came into relationship with Tiedge and Baudissin—here I came into contact for the first time with the theatrical world. Besides Edward and

Emil Devrient, I knew Sophie Schröder, who spread a noble brightness and that idealistic glamour over theatrical matters which is remembered to this day.

A whole world of clever and celebrated men used to assemble at Major Serr's house, belonging to science, art or the theatre. Music was represented by preference by music director Reisziger; nevertheless we had many opportunities of coming in contact with Mendelssohn and Schumann in Leipzig.

Thus a year's stay in Dresden, during which I attained the ranks of major and colonel, really gave me what I had wished for and expected—I lived amidst a stream of art and literature.

Although until the year 1842, I had my own residence and profession in Dresden, my stay there was broken by long and eventful journeys and undertakings, which all the more demand a description, the more universal their influence was on things in which I had to take part during those years. The memorable year which began for me on the 21st of June, 1839, forms, to a certain degree an independent episode of my life in Dresden.

I had reached my twenty-first year, and was, according to the rules of our house, of age. The declaration was made in Coburg with much solemnity; and in order to join my brother's fate with mine, in this important point, it was made possible by the legislation of a special decree that the celebration of his coming of age was to follow immediately and be publicly announced.

In the document which was drawn up concerning my brother, my father emphasized his expression of acknowledgement, 'of the heartfelt and affectionate relations existing between our two beloved sons, which makes it desirable that they may enjoy so important and significant an event together.'

Both town and country in Coburg took the liveliest part in the ceremonies of our coming of age.

It is not uninteresting to notice in the documents concerning me, now lying before me, that my and my brother's

public studies in Bonn were mentioned with particular pleasure, a proof of how unusual this manner of education for Princes of reigning Houses was looked upon as being.

I can still remember a humorous episode which occurred whilst the official addresses were being made. The President of the State Assembly suddenly began to flounder hopelessly in the middle of a stream of deeply affecting words, and only through the lucky and well-meaning striking in of the answering speaker was a most unpleasant mishap prevented and the painful situation thus brought to an end.

CHAPTER IV

RETURN OF PRINCE ERNEST FROM DRESDEN TO COBURG.—PRINCE ALBERT WITH HIS FATHER AT CARLSBAD; DISLIKED IT.—THEY VISIT ENGLAND IN 1839.—PRINCE ALBERT BETROTHED TO QUEEN VICTORIA.—PARALLEL BETWEEN QUEENS VICTORIA AND ELIZABETH.—SMALL INFLUENCE OVER HER DAUGHTER OF THE DUCHESS OF KENT.—BARONESS LEHZEN THE GOVERNESS; HER SCHEME FOR RETAINING POWER.—POSTPONEMENT OF THE MARRIAGE DISTASTEFUL TO PRINCE ALBERT.—DIFFICULTIES WITH THE GOVERNMENT AS TO HIS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STATUS.—MARRIAGE DEFINITELY FIXED FOR 10TH FEB. 1840.—THE COBURG FAMILY ARRIVE AT DOVER.—TRIUMPHANT POPULAR RECEPTION.—PRINCE ERNEST'S RESIDENCE AT THE BRITISH COURT.—TESTIMONY TO THE HARMONY OF THE QUEEN AND PRINCE'S MARRIED LIFE.—FURTHER UNPLEASANTNESS IN PRINCE ALBERT'S POSITION.—PRINCE ERNEST VISITS PORTUGAL.—HIS ACCOUNT OF THE PORTUGESE COURT, LISBON, ETC.—EXPEDITIONS IN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN.—ADVENTURE WITH BRIGANDS.—BARCELONA. — ESPARTERO'S REBELLION. — INTERVIEW WITH QUEEN CHRISTINA.—SHE CONSENTS TO REVIEW THE TROOPS.—RETURN TO DRESDEN.—THE THIERS MINISTRY IN FRANCE.—RUMOURS OF WAR.—CONTRADICTORY ATTITUDE OF LOUIS PHILIPPE.—PRINCE ALBERT'S OPINION. — KING LEOPOLD'S LETTER TO METTERNICH. — FALL OF THIERS. — THE GUIZOT MINISTRY.—ACCESSION OF FREDERICK WILLIAM IV OF PRUSSIA.—INTERVIEW BETWEEN HIM AND PRINCE ERNEST AS TO THE PROPOSED CESSION OF LICHTENBERG.—VIOLENT SCENE.—FAILURE OF NEGOTIATION.

In the beginning of July 1839 I returned from Dresden to Coburg, whilst my father, accompanied by my brother, went to Carlsbad. The stay there did not please Albert very much, and he wrote me despairing letters about the wearisomeness of the days. We had hardly a thought of how much the further course of the year 1839 promised both of us, and Albert in particular. In the autumn we once more found ourselves with my father in Reinhardsbrunn, united in the

closest bonds, and were enjoying a visit from the King of Saxony, after whose departure we all set out to spend a while in England, during which the engagement between Albert and Queen Victoria was brought to a settlement wished for by everyone. On leaving London in October we went to Brussels where we stayed with our uncle.

The event which took place here is an eminently historical one, often related by the person who took the greatest part in it. For me it had the twofold significance that on the one side it formed the greatest turning-point in the life of my only brother, and on the other gave our whole House a political position never thought of until then. Through Prince Albert's marriage with the Queen of England a new dynasty was founded for the mightiest kingdom of Europe, but the personal position which the founder was to assume hid difficulties and dangers which might fill a brotherly heart with heavy cares. Even to this day, fifty years later, when I write down these recollections, I have such a strong and distinct impression of what I have gone through, that it gives me much real trouble to furnish posterity with the objective matter of many a purely personal view.

The desire to forget any mistakes which may have been made, will in any event cause the matter to appear in the best and mildest light.

The Queen herself would not have been so completely and passionately filled by the principal event, if the remembrance of her inward happiness had not guided her pen every time she herself described that day, or caused it to be described by others.

Queen Victoria not seldom appears to historians as the Queen Elizabeth of the nineteenth century, She has a number of personal and political traits of character identical with those of the great and admired monarch of the sixteenth century. She stands on the same intimate footing with all European culture, thanks to her extensive knowledge of languages, as the friend and patroness of Protestantism stood with reference to the culture of the world in her time.

Full of interest for and attention to the work and the

welfare of her people, like Elizabeth, she seized the reins of government with a strong personal energy which appeared as if it would estrange her from the ancient ruling nobility, as it had her great predecessor. If parallels of the kind did not offer something of a scholastic character, the comparison between the two queens might be carried still further, but as regards the personal impression which is mentioned by persons habitually near the presence, such attempts appear not only inadequate, but even childish.

But the eminent skill with which Victoria uses her pen, the way in which she combines the cool reflection of a man with the womanly need of an affectionate heart for a diary, her possession in a high degree of that trait in great monarchs, a faithful remembrance of old friends and servants, of valuable relations and men, and, lastly, the manner in which she has fulfilled her difficult duties in life, with the utmost queenly understanding, all these points may lend some justice to the attempted comparison.

Regarding them from a point of view of feeling only, a difference shows itself between the two Queens of England, to the great advantage of the latter. For the extraordinary affection for her family, which existed in Queen Victoria, the full and free abandonment of herself to the circle of her relations, children and grandchildren, one might almost say, the yearly increasing wish to provide and care for that family even in the smallest particular, is what makes our Queen appear as far removed as possible from the lonely daughter of Henry VIII. This prominent family feeling was not so much an inheritance from her forefathers, as the result of a happy life, the consequence of her marriage with my brother. The warm capacity for happiness, as she afterwards found it, was a splendid present given her by nature, but fifty years ago the appreciation of such feelings was naturally not yet developed and in full force.

In her youth, Victoria stood alone, isolated, without proper guidance.

My aunt, the Duchess of Kent, was a woman of very excellent traits of character, but she had no great influence over

her daughter, thus, given the loveliness and gifts of the quickly developed and early grown heiress to the Crown of England, it could not fail that the seventeen year old ruler showed an indomitable will.

In the book about Prince Albert a small traitor has sneaked into one of the notes, which speaks of a state of things which gave rise to much more suffering than is generally imagined.

As is known, Victoria's governess was afterwards the Baroness Lehzen. The wise woman confesses in a letter to having played a little trick, which may have been attractive enough to a governess, as she desired in some degree to play the part of providence towards the twelve-year-old Princess. She therefore laid a genealogical tree, behind the tutor's back, in the history book, from which the Princess was to learn that she was the real heiress to the throne of England. To this discovery she joined a speech in which—one might humorously say—she plainly indicated the undoubted talent for reigning possessed by a governess.

The time came for the acquisition of Victoria's hand. That all the combinations with regard to my brother's marriage with the Queen which had been made since their childhood were nothing more than idle ideas, or good wishes, is well known.

Since Stockmar, as well as the Queen herself, had written concerning these matters, there is no need for further contradiction of a mistake which I have already pointed out above. But as late as to-day, the assertion that the bridegroom's journey in October, 1839, was only the formal close of an already decided matter, deserves a grave denial. Although several of the six suitors whom the Queen mentions in her life of Prince Albert, were not regarded after the death of King William IV, yet very powerful rivals still remained: for instance, at Louis Philippe's Court the hope of Victoria's marriage with Nemours was still so great that only Leopold's wife, Queen Louise, was told anything about Prince Albert's settled engagement.

The plan of having the marriage take place in three years'

time only was a really depressing thought, particularly to my brother; the Queen herself was sorry afterwards that it could ever have been supposed that Prince Albert would be willing to wait so long. But things of this kind no doubt sprang from the brain of the Baroness Lehzen, who wished to keep up her dominion still longer.

Without wishing to lay too great stress upon the governess's small campaigns, I must nevertheless say that her influence with regard to the Queen's entrance into rule was not without political danger. When we arrived in England the Queen's relations to the Government parties were of a highly unpleasant if not delicate nature. The regiment of Whigs was in every way unconstrainable; and the Tories had been made impossible through a Court lady affair which had given rise to the greatest vexations in the preceding May. The publication of Stockmar's Memoirs has earned the merit of having first thrown some light upon these matters. But even here the account is by no means complete, nor fully explained.

The surroundings in which the Queen was placed made the Prince's allotted task a difficult one indeed. My brother never expressed himself definitely concerning the value it would have been to him not to have to walk this path alone. But it would be mere prudery of friendship if to-day, nearly fifty years later, I were to consider before saying openly that he really needed my brotherly sympathy on the journey to England before his marriage. As is known, the engagement was settled on the 15th of October. There is no finer proof of the Queen's really great and open mind than the fact that she freely recognised in a letter to King Leopold, how much my brother was sacrificing in order to obtain a position which was made bitter to him in every conceivable way.

Even if Grey's assertion in his history of the Prince's youth be true, that the Queen spoke a great deal about the Prince's desirable title and position, yet in this important respect only too little was obtained. I know that the most decided declarations had to be made at the time, signifying that the Prince would never be satisfied with the dignity of

an English Peer. When, therefore, it was settled that he should take precedence of everyone in England after the Queen, this did not prevent most angry conflicts on the subject from arising for long years afterwards. But, at best, the difficulties of his rank were set aside by the English Court rather theoretically than practically; in international relations, on the other hand, the Prince remained in the unpleasant position of having first to dispute for the place due to him. If the Queen, to whom the many cases of precedence in English history would look, furnished ample grounds for the intention, had offered the Prince the title of King, the weak Ministry would not have had the courage to lay such a decree before Parliament.

After the Queen had made the settlement of her betrothal known to the Privy Councillors, began the most uncomfortable debates over my brother's dotation and position, disputes on which I need not enlarge, as they are known through Parliamentary documents, with all the attendant chicanery. That even his Protestant faith was made an object of discussion and doubt, appeared even at that time inexplicable to the German reader, and will never be understood by him, except when he recalls the fact that the Opposition wished to use that excuse as a lever for overthrowing the Melbourne Cabinet.

Many things attendant on this matter would have been otherwise, if, from the first the Prince had been willing to assume a more friendly position with regard to the old English aristocracy.

Long after we had again left England, the marriage was finally settled to take place on the 10th of February 1840, for the idea of a three years' postponement had, in consequence of a public declaration, which I had encouraged my brother to make, to be abandoned. So the moment came when my brother was to take leave of his Fatherland for ever. We travelled first to Brussels with our father, where a solemn reception of the Royal Consort of England took place, after which we set out for Calais; an English fleet squadron awaited the Prince and his wedding guests. We had a stormy passage, and it exercised a depressing influence on even those who

were not personally inclined to have superstitious misgivings.

At length arrived at Dover, our passage through the different towns and cities of the kingdom was like a triumphal procession. In London, however, an accident spoiled the ceremonial and joyful welcome prepared by the people, the bridegroom happening, in the most incomprehensible manner, to be driven through side streets, whilst the vainly waiting masses of the people had assembled in another part of the city.

I shall not go into a minute description of the festivities which accompanied my brother's marriage.

But I looked upon it as a real happiness that I was to remain nearly three months with my brother after his marriage, whereas my father left immediately after the rejoicings were over. Thus I was a witness of the daily increasing understanding between the young married pair, to both of whom their strongly defined characters made it by no means an easy task to understand the art of yielding one to the other. Nevertheless I could see the beginning of the heartfelt relations which afterwards bound them so closely together. In the correspondence which I carried on with my uncle during my stay in London, I often so vividly and drastically described the pleasures and pains of this process of heart training, that even Baron Stockmar once allowed himself to write the words 'all good and true,' beneath a humorous letter of this kind.

Yet I was essentially convinced that 'what my brother had succeeded in as a betrothed lover he would certainly not fail to attain as a husband.' 'Victoria,' I was able to write on the 2nd of March, 'remains consistent, she is invariably a loving, attentive, and even tender wife to Albert, and tries to find out his small preferences.'

For my part, my stay at the English Court gained me much experience in a certain way, which was that I thus had an opportunity of immediately learning English customs and modes of living. Many of the peculiarities of English society were more agreeable to me than they ever became to my

brother in after years. The passion for every kind of sport inherent in the nobility found more approbation and comprehension with me than it did with him, and in this way I obtained access into the otherwise reserved English nature.

I cannot say whether Prince Albert adopted from the first the right tone in his relations with this people. I have often affectionately disputed with my brother on this point, and always felt that his lot was hard, having to bring about an understanding with the Island nation.

When, during the last days we spent together, we rode out side by side and Albert was making his invariably apposite and clever remarks about everything which we saw, he would add with a sigh, 'When you are gone, I shall have no one with whom I can speak openly about these things. An Englishman cannot grasp or understand such matters, and only sees in words like those I have just uttered an arrogant desire to blame on the part of the foreigner.

The softening influence of a friend and never failing cheerfulness would have been of great advantage to the Prince in this awkward position with reference to English ways, and to a large portion of the aristocracy. People ought to have tried to make him more friendly. The Prince was now given an English secretary, as it were by virtue of office, and without having his wishes consulted in the matter, and this was not calculated to help the case as it then stood. He was an intellectual and gifted young man, Mr Anson, but filled with violent animosity towards large numbers of families.

He had been secretary to the Prime Minister, and had a very poor opinion of all Germans, so that Prince Albert fell into the danger of becoming little by little isolated from all his former friends. The only man with whom Mr Anson wisely tried to keep on a good footing was Stockmar, because he looked upon the Queen as not to be shaken in her affection for this old friend. As regards the remainder, besides several servants in the Prince's immediate service, the only German there was a private secretary, who took charge of the German correspondence. This place was then filled by a certain

Professor Schenk, who had once given us brothers lessons in English, and was formerly secretary to the Duchess of Kent, a good man, but beset by all the faults of a German Philistine. After he left, another mistake was made in the choice of his successor. Thus my brother's position in England was in every way difficult, and I may say quite objectively that he had to be the fashioner of his own happiness, in the strictest sense of the word. Nothing could be more unjust than the impression made by envy in Germany, that he owed his later distinguished position to good luck alone.

During my stay in England, the continual intercourse between the Island Kingdom and Portugal, gave me an opportunity of visiting my relations in the far South. So I made up my mind to take a journey southwards, which enabled me to recover from the manifold fatigues of the past months, as well as to obtain a great deal of the most interesting instruction.

A journey to Spain and Portugal then ranked amongst the great rarities of the Continent. I do not know that any German Prince travelled through the Peninsula as a simple tourist previous to the year 1840. My two chamberlains von Loewenfels and Gruben, and Doctor Florschuetz, my tutor's nephew, accompanied me.

At Lisbon, we found King Ferdinand and Queen Maria in an apparently firm, unshakeable political position; the affairs of the country were in order, and peace was assured; the internecine war appeared to be as entirely forgotten, as if more than one generation had sprung up since then. The Pretender was hardly ever mentioned.

My first impressions of Portugal and the Court, I described so completely and entirely in a letter, written at the time to my brother and sister-in-law in England, that I may be permitted, instead of giving my recollections here again, to copy a portion of it, since it may perhaps be of interest to the historians of Portugal, as coming from an eye-witness of the year 1840.

'DEAR ALBERT,—I am taking advantage of the next steamer again, in order to give you and Victoria my opinion on what I have seen and experienced. In order to do this with some method, I shall divide my letter into six principal parts.

'I. Ferdinand, as I have already said in my last letter, has grown to be a very agreeable young man, both physically and mentally. His figure is slender and well-formed, of the same height as papa, and his face, although it is on the whole unchanged, has assumed a much milder expression.

'His movements are very graceful, and his demeanour quite that of a king. His character, too, has developed in proportion; the sharpness, fretfulness and want of feeling which he sometimes showed have entirely disappeared, and he has gained a certain amount of good nature and cordiality. As I have talked about this a good deal with him, and openly told him what I had noticed, he in turn has told me with pleasure how great a difference he feels within himself, compared with the state of mind in which he came here, and how ashamed he is of his former faults and want of education and knowledge of the world. Now he takes pleasure in and looks forward to a great many things, concerning which he used to be perfectly indifferent. He can bring together a most charming circle, too, and chats with each member, sometimes in French, sometimes, as most of the gentlemen assure me, in fluent Portuguese.

'We have talked a great deal about our old life together in Coburg and Gotha; I have noticed with pleasure how dear these memories still are to him, and how he has preserved everything which reminds him in the least of those beautiful days.

'II. Donna Maria is at the first glance a psychological conundrum, if I may be allowed to use the word. I have set myself the special task of studying her.

'She is stout, yet by no means as ill formed as people pretend; her head is fine, and her eyes remind me very much of Aunt Louise. None of the pictures which exist of her do her justice.

'She never speaks to strangers; wastes but few words

on the courtiers, but to us and our acquaintance she talks a great deal. What is taken for embarrassment is really design, and what so many have called want of education is simply originality.

'I take her for a thoroughly clever woman, for, as long as I have been here, I have never heard a mistaken or illogical opinion from her lips, nor any flat or hasty remark, and that means a great deal, for I am more with Ferdinand and Maria than I was with you. Everything which Donna Maria says is apposite, and generally accompanied by a keen display of wit. She hears and notices everything, and, as Ferdinand often assures me, can comprehend the most difficult matter at a glance.

'You may imagine that we have talked on the most varied subjects, and naturally often touched upon matters which lie further removed from a woman's range of ideas, yet I have often noticed with pleasure how much interest she takes in everything, and how little she is inclined to be prejudiced.

'She is an exemplary wife and mother; both my gentlemen are perfectly delighted with the domestic qualities of their consorts. Such an affectionate surrender is rarely to be seen, she knows nothing of obstinacy, moodiness, etc., she lives only for and in her family.

'Both the children are most lovely, and will certainly bring their parents an increase of happiness year by year.

'III. I could say much concerning Dietz and his relations with the Royal Family and the country, as I now know them thoroughly, but as, for many reasons, I think it better to pass them over, I will only remark that one must never judge a matter at a distance, when one knows nothing about it; that is, that we have all been mistaken, and his position is by no means so monstrous as we have thought; and I shall certainly take the man himself under my protection, which will probably astonish you.

'IV. As regards the present internal state of Portugal, all seems to be going on very well; everything is quiet and contented in the provinces, and a few days ago the last Guerilla-leaders in the north gave themselves up to the Government.

In Lisbon alone there are still several Republican societies and many Liberal ones.

'However, one notices nothing of all this; on the contrary, the excessive politeness of the lower, as well as the higher classes, when they meet the King in the streets, fills one with astonishment.

'During the past three years, roughly speaking, Ferdinand has been steadily increasing in popularity, and I have noticed, not without great wonder, how willingly, with what zeal and circumspection he engages in the work of governing, which the Queen, who thus shows her wisdom, has given into his hands.

'Lisbon may thank Ferdinand for two things of the greatest importance. Firstly, the cleaning of the city and the improvement of the police. I can assure you, that I have seen no city in Italy which could compare with Lisbon for cleanliness, and the suburbs of Brussels would create astonishment here by their dirt. Secondly, the improvement and support of agriculture.

'Here too we can reap golden fruit. For centuries past quantities of corn of all sorts had been brought here from France and Germany, and Portugal has now been exporting a not unimportant amount of grain since the past two years. As regards the inner political events, even the very Liberal Ministers themselves must own that it is an impossibility to govern with the new Constitution. Unfortunately, however, it cannot be altered, and it appears to me that it would be a very good thing if it were left to rot alone, until it falls to pieces, and the Ultra-Liberals are at length disposed of.

'The Ministers are, as I have discerned partly for myself, partly from Ferdinand's description, very mediocre creatures. But few amongst them are possessed of any knowledge and understanding, and those of whom this may be said, are mostly false, dishonourable and very untrustworthy, besides being invariably poor. The Diplomatic corps, whom Ferdinand himself introduced to me, have, with few exceptions, made no favourable impression on me. The English Minister, Lord H——, particularly struck me as being a highly narrow-minded

man. Ferdinand complains greatly of his stubbornness and want of insight.

'V. The Court state is about the same as that of every German sovereign Prince, and the gentlemen are neither better nor worse than they are everywhere at Court. Ferdinand's adjutants are four tried and experienced officers, who all pleased me well. After Lavradio's description, I expected the Necessidades palace to be a magnificent castle, and was therefore not a little surprised to find myself in a house which, as regards fitting up, might both inside and outside be placed on a footing with Rodach. Indeed I considered the latter almost too good to be compared with it. The arrangements in the castle itself, such as table, cellar, service, are in good order, and are on exactly the same scale as at the Saxon Court. The cooking is particularly good, as it bears a great resemblance to our beloved household fare; I have already been surprised to see dumplings. The order of the day, since I have been here, is about as follows:

'At ten o'clock we sit down to breakfast; those who are present are, the Grand Almoner, the Chief Ministers of Ceremonies with the Court ladies, the Chamberlain, the Adjutant on service, and the Officers of the Watch. It is a kind of luncheon, at which rice constitutes the principal dish.

'I generally spend the morning with Ferdinand and Donna Maria; the Ministers often come to hand in some document, as do the Chamberlains and Generals. The Queen receives no one alone, but everyone comes to Ferdinand, who listens to them, arranges their affairs for them, and then only admits them to kiss the Queen's hand. When the person enters the drawing-room, Ferdinand always precedes him, and usually kisses her hand first. This struck me particularly. At two o'clock we generally ride out with the Queen, to examine anything worthy of notice in the city, or beautiful views and landscapes; we rarely return home before half-past five o'clock. Dinner is at seven, at which meal it is the exception for more persons to be present, than are at breakfast. After dinner, people come to pay their respects, as they do at Grandmamma's in Gotha. In the evening one is quite

free to go or stay as one likes, which I look upon as a very pleasant arrangement, for those who live at Court. I play billiards almost daily with Ferdinand and several gentlemen.

'VI. If I were to attempt to describe to you only half of the beauties of the city, the neighbourhood, the climate, in a word everything which one can enjoy with the senses here, I would need a year's time and a library full of blank sheets. I have never been able to feel enthusiastic about the South, but I realise now what the southern zone is. Even Gruben who lived some time in Italy, cannot get over his delight. Heaven really seems to have particularly blessed this land. The trees are greener, the sky is bluer, the earth is more fruitful, the mountains are higher and better formed, and the streams are more beautiful. One thinks one's self in Paradise. The charms of Lake Maggiore, which I had until now considered greater than any others, appeared to me like a daisy beside a full-blown rose, when I compare them with those of this country.

'The city is very remarkable; it lies like an amphitheatre on a row of hills, surrounded by the Tagus, and the streets follow without plan the hollows and elevations of the soil. I know of none like it. As regards the architectural style, it bears not the slightest resemblance to any Italian city, and the houses remind one of the old German towns. I might compare Lisbon to a Northerner, who is not willing to give up his native dress, yet through the influence of the climate is forced to make certain alterations in it.

'The vegetation is particularly pleasing, even if one cannot quite admit its beauty as a whole. We were hunting the day before yesterday in a wood lying near Lisbon, in the celebrated Depada. I imagined myself in India, or in the forests of Brazil. The tall trees were olives and orange-trees, and the undergrowth and thickets were a wonderful tangle of dwarf-oaks, aloes, cacti and wild asparagus, which grows nearly to the height of a man.

'ERNEST.

'*Lisbon, 6th June.*'

As will be seen from the foregoing sketches, I had grown quite at home in Lisbon. Life, nature and climate, all suited me uncommonly well. On the other hand, I was not very much delighted with the works of art, with but few exceptions. The Palace of Ajuta, built of white marble, but unfortunately only half-completed, and the convent in Belem, where the Queen had her country-seat, were buildings of great richness and thorough originality; the mixture of Gothic, Moorish and northern Italian styles, in spite of its variety of forms, strikes the eye not unpleasantly.

On the 3rd of June we left for the magnificent Cintra, where we occupied the old, indescribably beautifully situated castle, and made daily excursions which lasted for hours. We generally dined on the way in the open air, and returned home only when night was coming on.

The beauty of the view from the castle is so overpowering that one can find no words with which to reproduce its effect. The place is built high upon the Sierra de Cintra, and these mountains are covered partly with orange and citron forests, partly with fantastically spired masses of rock. The picturesquely scattered country houses peep forth from the green of the forests, and in the distance lies the ocean.

From Cintra we took a three days' trip to Maffra, the favourite resort of John VI. This castle and convent, built with indescribable magnificence, of white marble, is undoubtedly in the worst taste of any building I have ever seen.

Added to that, it lies in a dreary and uninteresting neighbourhood. An idea may be gained of its dimensions when one hears that 8000 men were comfortably quartered there during the Peninsular war, and even then it was not found necessary to use the principal rooms.

On the 27th of June I took passage for Cadiz, and found, as I had done during my whole travels through Spain, that it far exceeded my expectations. We were enabled to see a great deal to which strangers are not admitted, and I looked upon it as a particular piece of good luck that I was able to endure the heat—it was often 27° Reaumur in the shade—proportionally well.

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At Seville we owed the English Consul, who helped us to many an enjoyment, a debt of thanks. When we left he gave us his son as a travelling guide. The Queen had commanded through a Cabinet order, that I and my suite were to be received in every Spanish town with Royal honours. We had many advantages from this command, although on the other hand, we could not escape from much ceremony and formality.

As the Gibraltar steamer had already left, we went in the English man-of-war *Magician* to Tangiers, paid a visit to the Pasha, cruised for several days along the coast of Africa, and returned to Gibraltar as soon as the wind became contrary. We spent six days here as guests of the governor, Sir Charles Wilson. Parades, picnics, and balls made our stay most pleasant. After that we turned towards Malaga.

The journey from Malaga to Granada, through the mountains, deserves a short description on account of its adventurous character.

As the burdensome overland day passage under the July sun would have been unbearable, a fantastic train set out from Malaga towards one o'clock in the morning.

Loewenfels, the British Consul, and I, on horseback, all in the Spanish national costume, then a couple of two-horse carriages, *calesas*, only to be seen in Spain, and to be compared rather to a rack than a carriage, bearing Gruben, Florschuetz, and the luggage. Besides this, two merchants had joined us. The gentleman who owned the horses and his groom followed. The rear was brought up by six ragged Uhlans, whom the Governor of Malaga had given us 'as a protection.'

The next morning, after a tedious passage over the mountains, we reached a charming spot, where a solitary inn provided us with but poor shelter. In the evening we set out again, although our body guard of Uhlans had returned home in the morning. The innkeeper, whose sons were known throughout the district as dangerous robbers, assured me with the sincerest face that we might go on our way without anxiety. We made up our minds to keep our weapons ready and started at six o'clock in the evening.

The road lay between high rocks and steep declivities. The peculiar yellow appearance of the Spanish mountains showed in charming outlines when the moon rose behind the mighty masses of rocks and flooded the whole surroundings with soft light.

We went on in silence until the grey dawn appeared, when suddenly, from behind a bend in the road, ten or twelve adventurous riders, whose business was not to be mistaken, sprang in front of us. One of the band, in a most picturesque costume, and with the most courteous manners, introduced himself to us as the leader of the *Garda camina*, that is, in other words, we had immediately to pay a certain sum in order to secure the protection of these gentlemen.

A few of them understood and spoke a little English, and we had quite a long conversation, during which we had an opportunity of recognizing the innkeeper himself, who had inspired us with such courage for the continuation of our journey on the preceding evening.

When everything was settled, the leader made himself known as Santa Maria, who, we afterwards learned, was one of the most notorious robbers, and we exchanged pistols in the most friendly manner. Loewenfels received his girdle. The band stayed with us for two days, during the ascent of the pathless Sierra. They rode with vanguard and rearguard, and until we arrived before the gate of Granada, we were their more or less willing captives.

Half starved, and tired to death, we reached the old Moorish capital, whence we returned to Malaga by another route, and, after a sea passage which lasted six days, reached Barcelona on a Spanish packet steamer.

During our voyage we dropped anchor almost daily at the different Spanish ports, and thus it happened that I landed for a few hours at Taragona. Fate decreed that I was to meet an old man in an uninviting coffee-house, who revealed himself as a countryman of mine from Gotha. Being wounded, he had remained behind at Taragona, where the Gotha regiment had been stationed, and never returned home. Loaded with presents and shedding tears of joy, he

accompanied me on board ship. In Barcelona I was an accidental witness of the most remarkable political occurrences which characterise the recent history of Spain.

Queen Christina's regency appeared to have escaped the dangers prepared for her by Don Carlos, after he had taken up his abode on French soil, only to be all the more driven by the progressive party from that time forth.

During a journey made by the Queen Regent, the insurrection of June 1840, under the leadership of Espartero, broke out, finding its repressal in Barcelona.

I will now introduce my letter of the 2nd of August, addressed to my brother.

'DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,—Our return journey from Malaga was happily accomplished; we stayed there several days, in order to see the incomparably beautiful neighbourhood, and at length on the 26th of July, we steamed out of the port in the little *Mercurio*. Yesterday, we arrived here at Barcelona, after a tedious, fatiguing and exceedingly unbearable passage of six days.

'We generally travelled only at night, and during a portion of the morning, and stopped during the day, going on again in the evening. In this way we became acquainted with the towns of Almeria, Carthagena, Alicante, Valencia and Taragona; we were everywhere received with the most unbearable formalities.

'Valencia is indisputably the most interesting of all the towns, as the surroundings are also green and cultivated. The greatest excitement reigned everywhere, on account of the triumph which the ultra-liberals have so easily obtained by force of arms; no man considered himself safe, and the lives of several hundreds of unprotected officials hang by a hair. As I conceive that a detailed account of the present state of Spain will be of interest to you, I will give you a sketch of what is but indistinctly related in the newspapers, and not to be really imagined unless one is in Spain, and what I have heard from the lips of several highly

enlightened men belonging to the moderate Liberal party, as well as what I have seen with my own eyes.

'Yesterday, that is, on the 31st of July, we landed towards one o'clock in the magnificent port of Barcelona, and were not a little surprised, as well as somewhat pleased, to see that not the slightest tokens of honour were offered us, but had trouble on the contrary, to prevent our luggage being searched after we had been kept waiting for three hours.

'The reason was that Espartero had declared the town to be in a state of siege, in order to have greater freedom to do as he liked.

'We wandered on foot to a hotel, where we were about to ask for rooms, when a deputation appeared, sent by the town and English Consul, to lead us to a palace especially prepared for us. A few hours later, the Queen's chief master of ceremonies made his appearance, for the purpose of complimenting me and begging my pardon in the Queen's name for my unheard of reception.

'We were now really ushered to a large, roomy palace which had belonged to some exiled or escaped Grandee, but which barely contained chairs and tables. Nevertheless, a good dinner made up for everything, and the night unexpectedly brought millions of jumping creatures which languished for our blood, the end of all our fatigues, as we had been obliged for the last six nights to lie on hard benches on the deck for want of any better place.

'The English Consul and officers, who are with the army, had given us a short description of the following facts.

'The Queen is held a prisoner in the castle by Espartero, the army has blindly given itself up to him, as well as the mob and the ultra-liberals, but the Guards are less enthusiastic. 4000 men are stationed in the town, 16,000 in the immediate neighbourhood, and with them 3000 men more belonging to the disaffected National Guards. A mass of troops surround the castle day and night, the former Ministers have fled. The town authorities, as well as the Ministers, are low, stupid men and entirely the creatures of the Radical party, just like

General Espartero himself, who has so shamefully turned the tables.

'Early in the morning the chief master of the ceremonies appeared again, and informed me of the Queen's wish to see me at five o'clock. Meanwhile, the great Duke of Vittoria (Espartero) made his appearance, covered from head to foot with gold embroidery, accompanied by his entire general staff, consisting of over thirty men, and the whole body of generals, as well as all the civil authorities in immense numbers.

'At length, at three o'clock, we climbed into a frightful carriage, to drive to Court. The Court itself consists of the unfortunate master of ceremonies alone, who led me with fear and trembling to the Queen, who received me in person at the door, surrounded by the little minor Queen and her sisters. I saw neither ladies nor gentlemen, not even a servant. The dwelling struck me as being even worse than mine, and the mighty ruler herself but very poorly clad. She is a very handsome and attractive lady, and at the same time exceedingly amiable and condescending, and I may boast that she talked to me as if I were an old friend. The events of the day were naturally the only subject of conversation, and she described her present position in a heart-broken way, ending with tears in her eyes, and the words: "*Je suis la plus malheureuse femme du monde.*"

'I could not conceal the real state of the provinces from her, and noticed with pleasure that she was informed of everything, but deeply depressed at not having the means to help.

'After a conversation which lasted nearly an hour, she left me and we then returned Espartero's visit.

'He is an uncomely little man, without any figure whatever, awkward and bashful, and speaks very broken French.

'Nevertheless, I conversed a long time with him, and obtained a pretty clear insight into the army and the present position of affairs. The war may be said to have been concluded four days since, and one sees detachments of soldiers, wounded, and prisoners pass by daily. All the troops I saw

had a fine military appearance, and seem to be under good discipline. The town itself swarms with soldiers.

'The English Consul has just written me, that I can despatch you a letter this afternoon, so I will close. If it is possible, I will let you hear from me again from Marseilles, where I shall arrive on the 6th. Farewell, dear ones; I have heard nothing from you for three weeks; it is to be hoped that you are well.—With heartfelt affection, your faithful brother,

'ERNEST.

'*P.S.*—Whilst I was writing I received news from an adjutant of Espartero's that he had ordered a parade to be held in my honour, and would send for me this afternoon. 6000 men are to be present.'

What I announced in the postscript of the above letter really took place on the afternoon of the 2nd of August. Espartero held as imposing a review as possible in my honour. The troops had, however, for want of a proper exercising ground, to be drawn up along the Boulevards of the town. When we had ridden along the line, Espartero turned to me with a request, that I should go to the Queen and persuade her to see the troops pass by from the balcony of her prison. The influence, added Espartero, which I was more in a position to exercise over the Queen than anyone else at this moment, would make it easy for me to accomplish a task so important to the peace of the country.

And indeed, in the present position of affairs, it seemed as if the best thing would be for the Queen to make up her mind to save the appearances of authority, as she was no longer able to hold the reins of real power.

So I rode to the castle and laid my request before the Queen. I tried to talk her into acceding to the wishes of the man in power. But she was hard to persuade. A scene followed which was still more moving, than that which I had gone through with her earlier in the day, and which is described in my letter. At length the Queen yielded, really appeared on the

castle balcony, and insisted upon my remaining by her side.

People saw in this suddenly improvised event, a kind of reconciliation between the Queen and Espartero, and whereas much had been said up to that moment of the unruly spirit which had begun to show itself amongst the Guards against Espartero, an understanding was now regarded as possible.

Espartero led the troops past with the customary marks of honour, and the Queen showed by her presence on the balcony that she retained her rights with regard to the Duke and the army. The victorious army and its insurgent General had paid a kind of homage to the monarchical principle. That, however, the relations which appeared to be thus established would be of much worth or of long duration I did not hope, and therefore the further course of events could not surprise me.

The Regency of the radical General assumed at least a lawful form. But when I revisited Spain five years later, Narvaez had assumed the control, and the Western and European Powers were seriously beginning to try to set affairs in Spain on a firmer footing, by bringing about the marriage of the minor Queen. It will be necessary for me to resume the thread of this narrative later on.

I then set out after an absence of more than six months for Coburg, going by way of Marseilles and Switzerland, the Duchess of Kent being on a visit there. As the leave which had been granted me by the King of Saxony had meantime come to an end, I went back to Dresden. I found Germany in one of those exciting moments which I still remembered to have shared in during my youth. Just at that time the world looked upon a general conflict of the European Powers as unavoidable, that they were on the brink of a new war of coalition against the predominance of France.

Twenty days after Queen Victoria's wedding the Thiers Ministry entered into office in Paris, and this Ministry was destined to raise a storm in European affairs such as no one had witnessed for a quarter of a century.

Louis Philippe had unwillingly accommodated himself to the loss of the personal rule which he had exercised by virtue of his domineering influence in the Cabinet of the 12th of May 1839.

If the Opposition headed by Thiers and Guizot showed itself inimical to the King in either large or small matters, neither could Marshal Soult boast of very great success in foreign politics.

The Oriental question had lapsed into the alarming stage of a struggle between Egypt and the Porte, which latter was protected by both England and Russia. The battle of Nisib on the 24th of June dispelled all the illusions concerning moral support, and the avoidance of immediate warlike measures on the part of Russia and England in the fight against the Egyptian Pacha. The death of Sultan Mahmoud, the betrayal of the Turkish fleet, and the occupation of the throne by the six year old Abdul Medjid looked as if the Porte had ceased to be a Power.

The conqueror of Nisib prepared to seize the inheritance himself, and with much gnashing of teeth acceded to Francis' request that he would extend his conquests no further. But this demand, which was brought to Major Cullier, Soult's Adjutant, contained the promise that King Louis Philippe would become security for Mehemet Ali's possession of Syria. In this manner France and the Eastern Powers assumed a mutually unfriendly aspect.

Louis Philippe must have doubted his success in retaining England on the side of the French, at least as long as Lord Palmerston stood at the helm of foreign politics, for the latter, as he himself openly said, had made up his mind to humble France. The Opposition played Soult's wavering Ministry the usual trick of making Parliament refuse the Duke of Nemours the dotation on the occasion of his marriage with my cousin.

Regarding this latter, the King considered that the Ministry had not done enough in the matter. Thus Thiers' position was in no way enviable, when he placed himself at the head of the Government. That the King, even in the

smallest questions and matters, was forced to capitulate to the Ministerial rule, is well-known, and the victorious Opposition did not spare Louis Philippe the humiliation of seeing them show in the most public manner that the personal influence of the Crown had given way before the strict constitutional system.

Whilst the opinions in France against England and Russia were being expressed in a more and more irritated manner, the question of peace or war was laid before the Government by the four great Powers, France being excluded, on the 15th of July. Rumours of war in Germany and France were raised. No one liked to draw back from the popular cry on either side. Just as the literary men yonder, such as Edgar Quinet, who had for years striven for and preached the scientific and mental equalisation of Germany and France, were seized by an irresistible longing for German soil, even so the remembrance of the great war of freedom quickly disturbed in Germany the liberalising sympathies for the free-minded France of the July dynasty.

Those are good words with which one of the Germans who knew France best, described the situation of affairs, and which I would now like to cite as the development of my own German feelings arising from this period.

Those were the days of Germany's conception. The thought of union, which it had fostered for thirty years, and grumbled at too, first took root when the French deliverer of nations, and they who made them prosperous, so carelessly betrayed themselves as conquerors greedy of land; the heart of the nation was done with French ideals, the Imperialism of Heine, the Jacobinism of Börne, the Constitutionalism of Rotteck-Welcker—the hitherto dammed-up stream of national historical love of freedom won the upper hand for ever, during those hours of excitement.

Louis Philippe's attitude in the struggle between the Powers was in many respects very contradictory, and men were not wanting to assert that it had never been the King's intention to let himself be drawn into a war which would place his crown in danger.

At that very time the Napoleonic reminiscences took a firmer hold in France than they had ever had before. Thiers unfettered the political ideas of the Empire, and Louis Philippe tried to soften the Emperor's shade by means of the honours and homage which were offered to his ashes in virtue of the office he had once held.

Whilst the living heir to the Empire, Louis Napoleon, was waiting for his doom after the Boulogne attempt, the passions of the nation had again been roused against the coalition which his uncle had overthrown.

Did Louis Philippe really feel himself strong enough to play with those mighty questions? Was it only, as others say, that he might raise fortifications around Paris which were at length to hold the city in check, which only a year before saw the fearful ghost of the socialistic revolution appear in the form of the insurrection headed by Barbes and Blanquis?

There are no thoughtful historians who, with the materials hitherto furnished them, would like to give a certain answer to these questions. The man who probably held the best-grounded opinions concerning these highly personal and intimate courses of important events was King Leopold. During the most decisive days, after the close of the Convention of the 12th of July, he himself was the only person in Paris of the rank of a King who had an opportunity of at once talking to and observing the ruler of France and his father-in-law. He had thus been able to form an opinion without the help of Ministers, all of whom Louis Philippe hated.

The King's opinions on all the rumours of war will perhaps be best understood from a few words in a letter from my brother written on the 22nd of August.

'Louis Philippe is said to be beside himself about it,—there is some talk of Lord Palmerston's politics, which are favourable to the Spanish Espartero,—and this turns him more against England than even the Oriental affairs. Uncle Leopold has been here about a fortnight, and has tormented himself with all the Ambassadors and Ministers in order to keep the peace, which is placed in danger by the want of sense of a great many people.

'Yesterday he said to me, with half-closed eyes and that smile of his: "Oxenstierna has said that it is astonishing with how little wisdom the world is governed."'

In the following September King Leopold was at Wiesbaden, and wrote from there a very impressive letter to Metternich, who, there can be no doubt, contributed not a little to the present war:

'*Wiesbaden, Sept.* 15*th* 1840.

'It would be difficult for me to express to your Serene Highness how much pleasure your long and confidential letter gave me, and how deep an impression your practical and mild comprehension of these tangled and unpleasant complications has made on me. It is more necessary than ever to bring these complications to a practical and comprehensive solution.

'I received from Lord Palmerston the announcement contained in the despatch, which at length arrived, accompanied by a letter dated the 4th of September, in which he was very much excited over the speeches made by M. de Pontois at Constantinople.

'I have no objection to much that is contained in the despatch; it was natural for him to defend himself, in the same way, it was our opinion at Windsor that it would not be necessary to mention that the attitude of the Porte with reference to the *principal point* had always been understood; also, that the Powers had no other aim in view, than to seek their own advantage in the matter.

'One might have wished the despatch to be more propitiating, also that it had said decidedly that the five Powers must now come to an understanding about the joint questions. This, on the contrary, seems to have been put off again, and only to be admitted as the consequences of the complete execution of the Convention.

'Palmerston explained to me on the 23rd of August, that the despatch can only be looked upon as a trifle, against which our declaration, through a communication from the Convention, after the successful ratification of France, would be able to assert more positively the necessity of further immediate negotiations with France.

'Yesterday, the 14th, as I had wished first to wait for several pieces of information, I declared to the Queen, Melbourne and Palmerston my honest opinion of *the dangers of the present condition of affairs.*

'These notices will reach their destination on the 17th, in consequence of the increased ease of communication.

'I now consider it my duty not to hesitate an instant before informing your Serene Highness also of my conscientious and, heaven knows, my entirely unbiassed opinion. You alone, my dearest Prince, can work healing here, for whose counsel, whose opinion ought to make a deeper impression in England, than yours!

'The view of the case is this:

'If all further negotiations with France are put off until after the execution of the Convention, I think that France will not then enter into any, and particularly that *war and confusion are unavoidable.*

'As one must demand nothing of others which they cannot admit without delay, I have examined the attitude of the English Ministry with regard to a propitiatory and yielding line of conduct, and it appears to me as follows: The Convention has set aside the, to Englishmen, very unpleasant treaty of Unkiar Skelessy. Further, the Convention, if handled with moderation, will most probably be the means of settling the Turkish-Egyptian question. Thus the English Cabinet has evidently had a real *success.*

'Nothing is wanting now, for all this to be settled with the European Powers without a quarrel. There is only one way in which to accomplish this, even after your Serene Highness's valuable verdict, and that is: to negotiate with France concerning the joint questions, which transactions the Convention might then absorb, as the treaty of the 19th of April 1839, in a certain measure, puts an end to the treaty of the 15th of November 1837, as well as the Convention of the 27th of May 1833.

'Your Serene Highness's clear, discerning practical eye will at once see that negotiations of this kind are the only shield with which both King and Ministers can defend themselves

from parties and the extravagant Press. Yes, the sole means, in case anything of the kind should occur, of admitting a change of Ministry in France.

'Without *existing negotiations* for a joint contract, it is impossible *now* to make Thiers discontinue his war preparations, nor would it be *possible* for a *new* Ministry to step into office. We must be able to tell the country that "Negotiations are now on foot which allow of the Oriental Question being *arranged*, without our having to sacrifice honour; only let the Government vouch for this and quiet yourselves."

'If, however, this is refused, to begin negotiations at once, which will continually cause some delay or other, *l'amour propre Français* will be exasperated, so that, with the excessive want of patience of this people, an open war cannot be avoided. Palmerston also naturally does not wish for war, yet he thinks that it is sufficient to demonstrate the logical reason of this to the French as much as possible.

'But I have not withheld my views on this subject: if France remains perfectly free and unconfined, through the negotiations now in hand, the means of compulsion which render the execution of the Convention necessary, might contain either an *insulte in specie* for France, or bring about occurences of which France might say that they were dangerous to the balance of power in Europe or to French interests. If met half-way, this would either lead to war or to the giving of some pledge, Candia, for instance.

'In conclusion, I must entreat your Serene Highness to remember that the entire youth of France longs for nothing so passionately as for war, that the present state of uncertainty is reviving all sorts of bad passions which until now did not waste time on impossibilities, and that I know that German liberals have announced that we can get rid of the present state of things by means of war alone.

'Palmerston really thinks as I do about all this, but, since he was opposed on a sensitive point by Louis Philippe in the Spanish Question four years ago, he is not yet pacified, and is inclined through a desire for revenge to treat France in a by no means forbearing manner. I write you this under the seal

of confidence only, yet I know from Melbourne himself that it is so.

'Even at the present moment the English Cabinet is eagerly partial to the Anarchists in Spain. I had a great battle to fight on account of Espartero, but bravely defended my views concerning his shameful conduct. When one knows all about this, one cannot fail to wonder at the strange complication which will perhaps be the cause of an Austrian and Prussian war, the reason being that Palmerston is discontented because of his unsuccessful intervention in Spain against Don Carlos.

'The present moment is in my opinion the most dangerous which we have lived through for a long time, far more so than 1830, and the thing is to help France out of her false position.

'It gave me a great deal of pleasure to make the acquaintance of the President of the Confederate meeting: his manner pleases me immensely, and conversation with him is easy and useful. It is time to end my long letter, and I will only add the expression of my hearty and earnest respect, I was able to do this by word of mouth last year, and would it were only possible now. 'LEOPOLD.'

As may be seen, King Leopold was convinced that Louis Philippe did not seriously desire war, and he acted accordingly. The counsels which he gave Metternich for the correct diplomatic balance were in fact strictly followed. How rightly King Leopold had judged King Louis Philippe and his French nation was shown by the events which followed, amongst which the fall of Thiers meant in any case the preservation of peace.

On the 29th of October, Guizot placed himself at the head of the Government. He began by making peace with England and a friendly system of politics which quieted matters, but the new Ministry was soon nicknamed the 'English Ministry.' The cannon of the now allied Western Powers worked with such effect in the East that Syria was freed from Egypt's yoke and Mehemet Ali was humbled. Russia, however, took care that the Porte's useful rival should not be entirely destroyed.

Guizot also established an understanding with Prussia and Austria, so that the universal breaking up of the armies of the Continent might continue peacefully. It is true that King Louis Philippe was forced to declare to the German Powers, that everything should be done to reduce his army as much as possible, and that he only kept it up in order to protect France from revolution. For as the army was the only real supporter on which France could rely, therefore, he added pleadingly, he hoped his safety-valve would not be cut, if he was to keep his ground at all. This was indeed more than the national pride could bear. Slowly, but in ever widening circles, it was felt that the kingdom of July was retrogressing.

The diplomatic triumph over warlike France had at first a good effect on the German Powers. But when one observed the helplessness with which Germany had looked forward to the French attack, one saw that it contained a warning, from which the nation might expect that it would spur the two great Powers on to recognise the relations of the Confederacy.

Immediately after the great war scare of the year 1840, Frederick William III died on the 7th of June, and, with a superstitious belief in numbers, people based the greatest hopes on the fact that the name and person of the successor are connected with the notice of the secular celebration of the beginning of the reign of Frederick II.

Old Europe still found pleasure in the patriarchal habit of publishing wills, in which deceased monarchs were wont to address their people and successor for the last time, with political and moral advice.

Everyone in Prussian Conservative circles was deeply moved on reading the last will of Frederick William III, 'to his dear Fritz,' whom he warned against the spreading desire for innovation, as well as all exaggerated preference for the old systems.

Even more noticeable than this well-meant phrase was the fact that the old gentleman had no better advice to give his son concerning high politics than that he should remain in the most perfect harmony and unshakeable union with Russia and

Austria. And this at a time when, in the great strife between nations, Germany was most of all threatened, and looked to Prussia, which made no motion to enroll the flags of 1813.

Frederick William IV explained to the French Ambassador Bresson that he had ratified the agreement of the 16th July, only on condition that he would not be forced to take up the sword. For an instant he assumed the position of an independent man, only to bow before Russia's predominance the next moment.

The Prussian generals came to Dresden and Vienna to settle the eventual rules of measure in case of war, but were recalled as quickly and demonstratively, when peace was barely hinted at. The hopes raised by the new King brought him many heavy cares, on account of the fulfilment of the promises which had been already made by his father for the introduction of a constitutional state of things, but never redeemed.

When the new King went through the ceremony of coronation, on the 7th of September, in Königsberg he let fall for the first time some mysterious words which shut out the system of a representative constitution in Prussia. His speech was only half understood; the Liberals persuaded themselves that the most intellectual of all Princes could not possibly be a Reactionist.

The peculiar garnishing, amalgamation and distortion of progress and freedom, with the beliefs of the Middle Ages and authorities, had not yet assumed a tangible political form, and could not easily be understood. The future was to furnish instruction enough.

There was rejoicing at Eichhorn's nomination as Minister of Public Worship, as Altenstein had soon followed his King to the grave, and it could not be imagined that a trusted friend of Schleiermacher would soon begin to follow an exactly contrary course.

The time came for Schelling's official philosophy and romanticism on the throne. It would be fascinating to me to describe here, in all its aspects, the remarkably intellectual and yet to a certain degree so unfortunate personality of

Frederick William IV; the King rises before my eyes with much greater distinctness than most of my living contemporaries, but it will be allowed me to impart in these my life reminiscences, as in a good drama, the full knowledge of persons only at such moments when they are necessary to the course of events. And as it was granted me to be one of the persons who took part in the most important moments of Frederick William's history, there will be plenty of opportunity to depict the King fully and minutely.

I soon had a little meeting with Frederick William IV, a meeting which nearly concerned my personal affairs and those of Coburg, and which was so characteristic that it may be described more in detail.

The change of government in Prussia had inspired my father with the hope that a settlement might be effected of a particular matter between Coburg and that kingdom. As it was known that Frederick William IV, when Crown Prince, had given me certain tokens of his inclination for me, I was chosen, not only to greet the King personally, but to act as an intermediate in the complicated question of the rights of our House. The matter concerned was the accomplishment of an exchange of the little territory on the Rhine which Prussia so unwillingly saw given into my father's hands as a boundary at the Vienna Congress. The storms of the July revolution had, as I said above, more plainly betrayed the untenableness of the little possession.

In the year 1833, an agreement between the Governments on both sides had at length been come to, and now needed the ratification of the King of Prussia only. The matter appeared to be as good as settled, however, and Coburg was to receive domains in the province of Saxony as a compensation for the loss of the principality of Lichtenberg. We were so certain that everything was in order, that my father informed Prince Metternich of it, and received the following letter in reply after reading which, no one can doubt that the matter was really looked upon as settled. On the 31st of July, Metternich wrote to my father:—

'YOUR SERENE HIGHNESS,—I received your honoured letter of the 24th inst. yesterday. I understand the feelings which your Serene Highness fostered with regard to the settlement of the affair. Even if it must have given pain to exchange a sovereign territory for domains, yet the business matter is, on the other hand, based on such considerations that its results must nevertheless be reckoned on the good side.

'The German Government has trouble enough, in these unquiet times, to keep order in the different territories, which stand under the control of the central government. How it is with far removed territories, especially when they lie in a bad tract of land as on the left bank of the Rhine, is shown by daily experience.

'I therefore honestly wish your Serene Highness good luck with the successful measures, it is one of quiet for yourself and the country.

'Your Serene Highness will be pleased to accept the assurance of the profound attachment and reverence with which I remain,—Your Serene Highness's obedient and devoted servant,

'METTERNICH.

'*Konigswarth, July* 31*st*, 1833.'

The thought alone that we had reached our goal soon showed itself to be a mistaken one. My father made the mistake of inspecting the domains in the province of Saxony which he thought would be his, and thus arousing the attention of the public. The then Chief President and late Minister Rochow called the Crown Prince's attention to this settled agreement which was highly unprofitable to the Prussian Crown, on the occasion of an inspection of troops in the province of Saxony, and, as we heard later, it was the Crown Prince himself who hindered the ratification of the agreement by his royal father.

When Frederick William IV mounted the throne, my father considered it the proper moment to carry the matter into execution with the new King.

I left Dresden for Berlin and tried at once to gain informa-

tion from the Ministers concerning the reason of the refusal to ratify the agreement. I received little more than shrugs of the shoulders as a reply from these officials, and mysterious hints about the difficulties in the way, which are now no longer neutral, but of a very personal nature.

As I had tried the usual means with so little success, I decided to take a more direct road, and seized an occasion when at the King's table to remark that I would never succeed in this matter unless an opportunity were offered me of laying it before the King himself. With the greatest amiability his Majesty invited me to a conference the following morning.

I set out at the right time, and, well armed with documents and papers, entered the King's presence, not having failed to sketch out a well-considered lawful *exposé*.

The King listened almost as if in consent, but when I had said all I had to say, and reminded him last of all of the royal promise which his father had made, he flew into a most incredible temper.

'Do you think that I am going to continue all the stupidities which my father began?' he cried, his face red with anger. 'Those counsellors who spoiled and used everything, were blockheads!' and continuing to thunder out his ill-feeling against the past Government, he broke the inkstand in two, so that the ink flew out in all directions, and the painful moment was brought to a close through the accident. Upon this he excused himself, grew perfectly mild again, and went on in the most friendly and polite manner to say that he really could not agree to the exchange of the territory for domains.

Thus ended the conference.

I think it hardly necessary to add, that I was astounded, and I no longer recollect all the thoughts which agitated me concerning this enigmatical man. I well remember the historical affair of the costly cup broken by Napoleon in the Castle of Leoben, but I did not find the occurrence of equal importance nor sufficiently historical to play the Napoleon on its account. It was the King's real nature to go out of himself in this way. The King, who still held me bound

by the magic of his former friendliness as Crown Prince, was at that time a man of forty-four years of age, and exactly twice as old as I was. This difference in age occurs only once during the lives of two human beings; it disappears with every advancing year, and only too often the illusions which one has concerning the importance of others, disappear with it.

With King Frederick William IV, I gained this experience after the lapse of ten years only.

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE OF PRINCE ERNEST.—PREVIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE HOUSES OF FRANCE AND BAVARIA.—THE CAMP OF NUREMBERG.—KING LOUIS AT THE MONKEY SHOW, PRINCE ALBERT RESPECTING HIS BROTHER'S EARLY MARRIAGE.—INTRODUCTION TO THE HOUSE OF BADEN.—HIS FATHER'S WISHES.—AT THE HUNT.—IN LEIPZIG.—NEWS OF PRINCESS MARIE'S BETROTHAL.—THE QUEEN OF SAXONY INTERESTS HERSELF.—THE VISIT TO SCHWETZINGEN.—INTERVIEW WITH THE GRAND-DUKE, DUCHESS AND PRINCESS ALEXANDRA.—SHE CONSENTS TO THE BETROTHAL.—PRINCE ERNEST'S LETTER TO KING LEOPOLD.—THE MARRIAGE TAKES PLACE.—VISIT TO BRUSSELS AND LONDON.—THE RETURN HOME.—BECOMES AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE MINISTRY.—STAY AT ST CLOUD.—THREATENING ASPECT OF AFFAIRS.—THIERS; OUDINOT; GERARD.—DEATH OF THE REIGNING DUKE OF SAXE COBURG-GOTHA, AND ACCESSION OF PRINCE ERNEST.—HIS POLITICAL VIEWS AT THE TIME.—AFFAIRS BETTER IN GOTHA THAN IN COBURG.—ENMITY OF GERMAN COURTS.—THE VEXED QUESTION OF TITLES.—JOINT MANIFESTO OF THE THREE DUKES—SAXE-ALTENBURG, SAXE-MEININGEN AND SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA.—THE DUKE'S MEETING WITH PRINCE ALBERT.—THEY DIFFER ON MANY POINTS, AS REGARDS THE GOVERNMENT.—THE DUKE'S SUMMARY OF PRINCE ALBERT'S CHARACTER.—STOCKMAR, AND HIS INFLUENCE.—SEPARATION OF DUCAL AND STATE AFFAIRS.—RESIGNATION OF VON LEPEL.—PRINCE ALBERT REGRETS IT.—CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES IN COBURG: AND IN GOTHA.—PRINCE ALBERT'S COMMENTS ON HIS BROTHER'S SPEECH AT OPENING OF GOTHA ASSEMBLY.—STATE OF AFFAIRS IN PRUSSIA AND AUSTRIA.—KING LEOPOLD'S OPINION.

IT is said that princely marriages in the present century have long since ceased to have any political meaning. The world, people intimate, has grown enlightened enough no longer to allow itself, as formerly, to be influenced by the way in which chance marriages may turn out, and the path of events in the Europe of to-day lies far above the personal relations

and affairs of a number of historical families. I consider this view of state life fundamentally mistaken, and think, rather, that the right understanding of a large number of historical events is thus deliberately prevented.

Meanwhile, it is not my intention to express myself generally on the subject of the political importance of marriages in reigning families; looking back upon my own experiences, I can only say, that amongst the countless marriages which I have seen take place in the houses of my relations and friends, or at which I have assisted, I could mention but few which, in the course of events, have in no way influenced general affairs.

But I could say of many, that they have immediately and decisively, even in our day, affected the politics of both foreign and home states. More than one marriage story can be said to be little behind those of the Bourbons, Hapsburgs, Tudors, and Stuarts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in this respect.

When will the time come when royal ladies will not have a direct and, what is more, an indirect influence over affairs!

In going over the past, I need only mention the four sisters belonging to the House of Bavaria. How could one think of European, and particularly German, politics, without at the same time thinking of those intellectual and energetic women? Talleyrand's '*où est la femme*' nowadays applies to the other sex only where politics are concerned.

If, following the course of the events which have filled my life, I now speak of my own marriage, I by no means intend, by virtue of my own position, to imply that these views might be applied to the same; but when, after nearly fifty years of married life, two people who harmonise completely, feel as great friendship for one another as they felt on the first day, I may be allowed to say that the recollections which I shall relate here, are almost as equally those of the good and noble woman whom I brought home in the year 1842, as they are mine.

As I have already mentioned, an attempt to marry me to a daughter of Louis Philippe was frustrated by our belonging to

different faiths. The intention to unite me to the House of Bavaria was likewise impracticable, because at Catholic Courts a prejudicial view had gained the upper hand which in previous times of religious indifference would have seemed almost incomprehensible.

Amongst the children of King Louis, with whom my father, and particularly my uncle, King Leopold, had been on the best terms since the time of the French dominion, Princess Adelgunde, who afterwards married Duke Francis of Modena, was destined for me.

Queen Marie of Saxony would have been very much inclined to favour this union if the demands for the education of Catholic children, which were already beginning to be made in Germany in mixed marriages, had had any prospect of being granted. Under these circumstances, the Bavarian project of marriage had already been abandoned, when, on my return from Spain in the summer of 1840, I visited the camp of Nuremberg with a number of Saxon officers.

During this visit, which lasted from the 1st to the 15th of September, I had daily opportunities of seeing King Louis and his family, and learning to know them better. His peculiar nature, which showed itself in many a joke and comic idea, made an indelible impression on all who had any intercourse with him, and during the stay in Nuremberg also he furnished much food for lasting anecdotes.

At that time the camp of Nuremberg and the drill of the Bavarian army were of but little interest. The hours during which we were neither attending manœuvres nor sitting at tables were difficult enough to fill up, and there was a perceptible want of amusements for the many strangers and native officers.

One warm afternoon, after a rather mediocre royal dinner at the Castle, as I was about to take leave, the King asked me the following critical question: 'Where in the world are you going to kill time this evening?' I was forced to acknowledge the truth, and said with some embarrassment that, for want of anything better to do, I had had the intention of going to a monkey show. The King seized upon the

idea with childish delight, 'Then I'll go with you,' he exclaimed, and although I attempted to protest, he would have his own way, and in a short time I and the crowned head had taken our places in the booth near the town gates, amongst sutlers, non-commissioned officers and a crowd of common people.

The monkeys went through their parts amidst ringing applause, and at the end, when they were being rewarded by the audience with apples and bread, a certain commotion arose from the fact that the Burgomaster had suddenly appeared in the booth, arrayed in full official uniform, and began making a speech, in which he expressed his patriotic joy at the presence of his King. His words were interrupted by applause from all sides. Upon this the King leaped upon a bench and asked in his well-known loud voice: 'Now, for whom is this intended, for me or for the monkeys?' This put an end to everything. Years afterwards, when we met again, the King often asked me if I wouldn't take him to another monkey show.

My friendly intercourse with the Bavarian family was never broken off on account of the non-fulfilment of my wish to become one of them. Concerning other Princesses whose hand I might obtain, my brother wrote to me on the 4th of September, expressing the most earnest desire to see me soon married.

'As we are in the same position as England and France. Belgium and Portugal, we must act honourably in this matter. Meanwhile, I look upon your marriage as necessary, and the choice very limited. . . . The only desirable match would be with the daughter of the Grand-Duke of Baden. I certainly recommend this, after all that I have learned concerning her; Victoria also and uncle Leopold willingly consent to it. She is, moreover, the easiest of access and the least dangerous to sound. I would visit Karl Leiningen in the autumn, and take this opportunity of seeing her, without drawing attention to it, and then think the matter over. She is said to be very amiable.'

Meanwhile, I had an opportunity of coming into contact

with the House of Baden even sooner and more unrestrainedly than my brother thought.

In the autumn of 1840 there was an assembly of the Eighth Army Corps at Schwetzingen, at which I was commanded by the King of Saxony to be present with the same officers who were with me at Nuremberg. The Grand-Duke of Baden had naturally established his Court at Schwetzingen, and was there with his whole family. Here I saw the Princess Alexandra, his eldest daughter, who had not then completed her twentieth year, simple and natural, that is, adorned with what remained most precious in her during her whole life, and which was most admired in her by both high and low. But it would not be quite true if I were to say that this meeting was the cause of the marriage which took place afterwards, as it was to be brought about by a peculiar chain of events more quickly than I had expected.

My father's greatest wish was to see me settle in Coburg, and my early marriage appeared to him as the principal means of bringing this about. During a short stay made by Prince William of Prussia and his family at Reinhardsbrunn, my father conceived a very strong desire for me to take the Princess Marie for my wife.

This gave rise to an agreement that, although it should not be looked upon as a binding engagement, both sides should remain disengaged for some time.

Whilst I was living the life of a soldier in Dresden, in the winter of 1841-42, I accompanied the King once to a hunt, to which the town of Leipzig had invited him. On my way thither, as I was thinking of the disagreeable winter's day, and the probably equally disagreeable hunt, and gazing through the window at the tiresome plain, one of my comrades, who had lately been appointed aide-de-camp to the King, asked me if I had heard of the latest engagement in Berlin.

He then told me that the Crown Prince of Bavaria was betrothed to the Princess Marie, and that the marriage would take place during the coming year.

The man had no idea how nearly his story concerned me, but I could perceive from the King's having kept it from me,

that there must be truth in the matter, and that I, the only sufferer, was probably the only one from whom the matter had been concealed; no pleasant situation, but what could I do except remain silent!

That evening we spent the night in Leipzig. Chance willed it that at the hotel I should meet the Prince of Fürstenberg, who was married to the Princess Amalia, the sister of the Grand-Duke of Baden, and was consequently the uncle of the Princess who afterwards became my wife.

Still full of what I had heard that morning, I was but little inclined to fix my attention as closely as was necessary on a game of cards to which the Prince had invited me late in the evening.

I soon turned the conversation to the subject which secretly occupied me most, and remembering that I had seen the family of Baden and the Princess Alexandra at Schwetzingen, I explained to the uncle that I would like to marry, and asked him with sudden frankness if he thought I could win the hand of his niece. He expressed his opinion that I would be gladly welcomed at the Court of Baden, and that I could not possibly make a happier choice.

This helped me to make up my mind decidedly, and when I returned to Dresden, I told the Queen everything, as I knew that she took the greatest interest in what befell me. I begged her, as the conduct of the Prussian Court could not leave me indifferent, to do something for me in this other matter, upon which she promised to make inquiries at the Court of Baden. But the answer was painfully slow in coming, and although I repeatedly met the Queen, she never recurred to the affair.

I had intended to leave Dresden on New Year's day, in order to celebrate my father's birthday, which took place on the 2nd of January, in Gotha. On the 28th of December, the Qeeen sent for me and informed me that I could rest assured that I should be heartily received at Karlsruhe, if I were to make a visit there.

I hastened to Gotha, having decided to go straight to Karlsruhe from there. The only question now was how to

obtain my father's consent. He said that the matter had been neither sufficiently prepared, nor rightly begun. But I remained steadfast, and without allowing the reason for my journey to be known, I started for Karlsruhe, in accordance with the invitation of the Court there.

When I presented myself to the Grand-Duke, I received the pleasantest and most friendly reception at his hands, but when our conversation was over I became less and less able to banish the thought that the excellent Prince had either been left ignorant of my own intentions, or that he had intentionally avoided the subject. My position was a very odd one, and I thought in my heart of my father and his disagreeable prophecies.

But when the same farce was played by the Grand-Duchess, and she appeared anxious to hear about everything except the reason for my journey thither, my embarrassment reached an exceedingly high point, and I saw that something unusual must be going on.

However, the favourable news given me by Queen Marie could not possibly be the result of a misunderstanding, and it could not be doubted that I had been expected at Karlsruhe. Therefore, I no longer hesitated, but spoke to the Grand-Duchess of the wish which, as she was aware, had brought me thither. She then told me that they were heartily glad of it, but that the principal thing now was to obtain the Princess's decision.

I need not say how suddenly the whole situation grew all at once clear to me, and cannot deny that my journey in search of a bride was by no means lessened in interest by this little *intermezzo*.

The Princess came, and we were left alone. There was a moment of silence. Could my father have been right when he said that the affair had not been managed right from the first. As I looked at the Princess, I was overcome by the conviction that hers was a nature to whom nothing but the most open character and the completest truth could be pleasing.

So I said frankly that I had come to Karlsruhe for the

purpose of asking her hand in marriage. 'Either,' I continued, 'tell me that you consent, and then I shall stay and we will learn to know one another better, or simply say the one word which your parents perhaps kept back out of anxiety and consideration for me. I shall in that case leave this house with the firm conviction that no one else will ever know anything of what has taken place to-day.'

It will not be wondered at, that after the lapse of so many years, I am unable to repeat word for word the conversation which followed. Still, I can remember that the Duchess said that nothing could please her more, than to have a husband who spoke so openly, freely and honourably, adding, with the most amiable knowledge of human nature, that a near acquaintance often led to great disappointment, and that the best things of all were belief and trust. In these words she gave her consent, and said that we might at once declare ourselves betrothed.

My father was right so far, my marriage was indeed diplomatically unprepared. But it was to be all the happier, humanly speaking.

I myself will only add what I said to my uncle Leopold in a letter dated the 7th of April 1842 :—

'Heaven has let me find in Alexandra all that I ever wished for.'

Our time of betrothal lasted an uncommonly short time. The affairs of the House of Baden had much to do with this. Quite unintentionally, and only because of the confiding trust with which I was met by the greater part of the relations living at Karlsruhe, I had conceived an ardent wish to have my bride safe at home as soon as possible.

Our wedding, therefore, took place as early as the 3rd of May 1842, and the quick result of my wooing was the reason why my father and Prince Leiningen were the only members of my family who were present in Karlsruhe.

My brother and the Queen of England wished us to spend the honeymoon with them, as any other arrangement was rendered quite impossible by the political situation of England at that time, as may also be seen in Prince Albert's book.

However, I took my young wife at once to her new home, where my father gave us Kallenberg Castle as a residence. We entered Coburg triumphantly amidst signs of the greatest enthusiasm on the part of the people.

A few days later we stood together on the well-known balconies of Kallenberg Castle, and gazed over the wide stretch of country which lay before us, and the sunny landscape seemed to promise us the happiest future. My father was no less pleased than myself with my wife's winning person, and the most affectionate and sincere family relations soon developed between him and her.

In July we at length started on the way to visit our relations in Brussels and London. So beautiful a bond of friendship has seldom been seen as that which grew between the Queen of England and my young wife, and it outlived all the storms of later years.

In her book about Prince Albert the Queen herself mentions the pleasant days of our stay, which were unfortunately clouded by the startling news of the death of the Duke of Orleans in Paris.

We spent most of our time at Claremont during our visit to England, returning to Kallenberg on the 21st of August, and only leaving for a short time in the autumn to go to Dresden, where I introduced my wife at Court. Besides, the time was approaching when I should seriously begin to study the affairs of Government. My father himself showed me the way.

I became a real member of the Ministry, in the meetings and work of which I took an active part. It was only natural that I did not always agree with my father's views on questions of administration, but it was pleasant to me that no difference of any important nature arose. I turned my energies principally to gaining information, and had not the slightest foreboding that the moment was so near when I would have to put my new studies and experience to Government uses; but the sad day was to come very soon.

Meantime I carefully kept up my relations with the Saxon army in Coburg also.

Shortly before my marriage I had been promoted to the rank of Major-General, and although not on immediately active service, I was summoned by the King's desire to attend the exercises in the autumn of 1843, on which occasion I took command of a mixed brigade, in order to become proficient in the handling of large bodies of troops.

In the year 1843, on the 20th of April, took place the marriage of my cousin Augustus with the Princess Clementine, the daughter of Louis Philippe, in Paris. I was sent thither by my father as representative of the House of Coburg, and made use of this opportunity to introduce my wife at the French Court. We spent the first part of our stay with the Royal Court at St Cloud, the latter part at the Elysée Bourbon Castle, where a household was placed at our disposal. I had ample time in the two months during which our stay lasted to become acquainted with the state of things as well as the important personages, and could not but be convinced that matters there were becoming more and more disquieting.

The secret societies, whose fermenting activity could be seen everywhere, appeared to have succeeded in awakening the greatest anxiety even in the minds of most of the members of the Royal Family. They felt as if they were standing on the edge of a volcano.

Those amongst the Princes who, like the Duc de Nemours, had already by reason of their age, received important commands in the army, gave their whole minds up to military matters. The Duc d'Aumale sometime afterwards organised the Zouaves, wrote a very able pamphlet on the subject, and became more or less the discoverer of a new order of battle for the French army, particularly as regards the use of light infantry.

I renewed my acquaintance with Thiers, begun in the year 1837. After he was banished to England I saw him frequently, and at length at Versailles again in 1870, where we had rooms next to one another, and often reminded one another of the time when he was leader of the Opposition against Louis Philippe.

Amongst the commanding officers with whom I grew

acquainted at that time were Marshals Oudinot and Gérard, and I found both of them to be interesting relaters of the Napoleonic campaigns. Both were well acquainted with the land of my birth, for Oudinot commanded our Saxon contingent in 1812, and Gérard was for a long time a commander in Gotha. In the middle of June I returned home, and was not to see Paris again under the government of the Orleans.

Fate had decreed that I was to be called only too soon from my contemplative life to perform the duties of my own reign, for my good father died unexpectedly on the morning of the 29th of January, 1844, having just completed his sixtieth year.

When it is said in the Queen's book that my brother had been prepared by Stockmar for the possibility of such an event, it is only an hypothesis, founded upon the fact that the latter had foreseen this in his quality of physician. My brother was as much staggered by this severe and unexpected blow, as I myself was, and the country, which deeply deplored the loss of the vigorous Prince who had enjoyed the greatest popularity until the end.

It proves but little, when one collects the papers which tell of one's state of mind during days of enduring pain. Even the very words which have been wrung from a suffering heart, give the reader but a very incomplete idea of how and what one has suffered.

I will therefore avoid everything in these notes which relates to purely personal feeling, or which can have no claims on the memory of the world. The place where the departed stood is empty, and another comes and fills it. Fate has this hard rule for great and little, high and low. After the lapse of years and centuries history sometimes joins this change of men to periods and epochs of state, but in the real course of life even kings and mighty princes die, without making the slightest change in the immediate present.

But within the family the gap remained unclosed for years, as my father, being the senior of the whole House, formed the central point of all intercourse. Now I stood alone; of the

older generation only my stepmother and grandmother lived at home in the strictest retirement.

The latter, with whom the reader has become intimately acquainted through the life history of my brother, had hardly one enemy during her whole long life, and was looked upon until her death in the year 1848, with really rare veneration throughout the land.

Meanwhile I had neither the wish nor the necessity, in my new field of work, to make the change of government immediately felt.

I was perfectly convinced that the world, and particularly Germany, stood on the brink of an epoch of the most powerful political changes, and that not one of the Princes of Germany, who had become rulers, could look forward to a quiet existence such as had been the lot of my father's generation for the last thirty years; but I was far from thinking, modestly situated as I was, of setting the stone rolling. The task which seemed to me to have been set for me, placed at the head of two of the smallest German states, was not to forget to reef the sails before the storm.

I had addressed to my uncle a tolerably comprehensive letter, a kind of memorial, which now lies before me, and in which I furnished him with accurate information concerning the condition of Germany both far and near. The defects of former Governments, and the improvements of those to come, were enlarged upon, and attention called to them. I tried to make clear to myself what position I was to take with relation to the greater Powers of Germany; I tried in every way to place myself on the real level of political affairs, and, most of all, to finish everything that my father had begun.

'More than a fortnight has gone by since that dreadful morning,' I wrote on the 14th of February to my uncle in Brussels, 'the wounds are still bleeding, but I have turned to my difficult calling, and try to account to myself for the way I am to go, the principles which I must cherish.'

I found the inner state of things better in Gotha than in Coburg. In Gotha order reigned in most branches of administration. One of the results of this was the quiet and

prosperity which increased every day throughout the entire principality. An excellently planned network of streets facilitated business, and the condition of the city of Gotha could not be said to be other than prosperous. Amongst the old Gotha nobility there were many noble and competent men, and great progress had therefore been made in legislation during the past years. I did not consider it necessary to make any great change at once in the constitution of local affairs; but it was clear to me that what both duchies needed first of all was similar constitutional laws, and to a certain degree, like institutions.

I will not conceal the fact that after the lapse of a year things did not look so bright to me, and I had a feeling of not being upheld sufficiently literally and without prejudice by the men in office. But I will only say at present how disinclined I felt from the first to pull down what I considered as in any way useful.

Things were different in Coburg to what they were in Gotha, for the former had not increased in prosperity, and the relations of the different orders had grown very uncomfortable through misapprehension of constitutional principles. But where it appeared impossible any longer to neglect making a change, with relation to internal government I could keep to the path already trodden by my father, for only a few hours before his end I had spoken with him of a plan of general reform, with the principles of which he had expressed himself as being entirely satisfied.

The most important moment of my discussion with King Leopold, was without any doubt that concerning the position of my House in relation to other German Princes. Even at this day, I can hardly make the document public, yet it will be permitted me to say, that I could see no satisfaction in the relations in which the whole House of Coburg stood at that time as regarded most of the German Courts.

I imagined that the enmity which was shown our House by some, was owing to our want of activity with regard to German questions, and may now say plainly that it was surely an honourable German thought, when I wrote to King Leopold in dry terms:

'We have brought things to such a point that we can never again act as German Confederate Princes belonging to one of the oldest German Houses, but rather as related to the Great Western Powers, that Coburg is looked upon as the seat of all anti-German intrigues against the Confederacy, as the seat of the ultra-liberalism which has spread throughout the West, and is cried down as an infamous spot. . . . We must become honourably German again, . . . and bury all questions of strife. . . .

'I must, as a young German Confederate Prince, be able to recommend myself freely and with a good conscience to the discretion and indulgence of thirty-six colleagues.

'This is the point which I must enforce upon the Confederate Princes, but not upon the high kindred in the west, for I am not to blame that you are the King of Belgium, Albert, Consort to the Queen of England, and Ferdinand King of Portugal. It is a pleasure to me that you are all my relations, and, God willing, friendly disposed towards me, that you are in the eyes of the world great and splendid as men and rulers, but I must certainly not clothe myself in your fame before my Confederate colleagues.'

It is true that I could have written thus to none but as great and noble minded a man as my uncle was, without being misunderstood; but my uncle did not for a moment mistake my meaning. He understood that I must strive 'to bind myself to the principal Courts, particularly to those of Vienna and Berlin by virtue of my position as a German Prince.'

But I did not hide from myself how difficult this was at the time. It was unfortunately, hardly possible for me to keep up relations with the Imperial House, as pains appeared to be taken to prevent a warm return of my advances. In spite of the personally friendly relations with the King, it was no less difficult a matter for the politician to obtain support from Berlin.

'The seat of everything which is not clear, of everything which is contradicting, is at this moment in Berlin,' I wrote at the end of my *exposé*; 'the principles most dangerous to

the endurance of the Prussian Monarchy are hatched by the King himself, and yet real liberalism is not honoured.'

The good intentions which I had in remaining true to the German Confederacy were soon to be severely tried by the progress of an unexpected event which had begun long before I had entered into power. Concerning this I can only repeat what I wrote to King Leopold on the 10th of May, 1844:

'You will laugh a great deal over all this, one might imagine one's self back in the days of the peace of Westphalia.'

The Saxon Dukes, strange to say, had passed from the times of the Rhine Confederacy with new titles, of which all other princely houses had known how to possess themselves in the most grasping manner, to the days of German Confederacy, and had retained the rank which could not be contested by those who had been mediatised.

The question of titles had therefore arisen more than once in the Saxon Ducal Courts, and negotiations were set on foot concerning the adoption of the title 'Highness,' which, however, dragged on for an unconscionable length of time.

It was not to be denied that, in our intercourse with foreign Courts particularly, we suffered many a disadvantage on account of our title, which was at that time by no means suitable, as though reigning Princes we ranked after all the Princes in the western kingdom who bore the title 'Royal Highness.'

That something must be done under these circumstances was clear, and the fact was recognised on all sides, even by German Governments. But as, on my entering into power, I had undertaken this matter, it must be acknowledged that I had been too hasty.

After the decisions of Aix-la-Chapelle, there could be no doubt that the whole matter was not one for the German Confederacy; and, on the other hand, the title 'Highness' could not warrant an independent recognition in Vienna and

Berlin, but, at the best, promised protection for the German Diet, whose competence was again questionable.

I was thus certain that an accomplished fact only could rescue us from this dilemma, and as I feared nothing more than the diplomatically juridical examination of a matter like this, as was usual with the German Diet, I joined in a House and Family resolution with the Dukes of Altenburg and Meiningen, the contents of which were as follows:

By the Grace of God,
We, JOSEPH, DUKE OF SAXE-ALTENBURG,
We, BERNHARD, DUKE OF SAXE-MEININGEN,
We, ERNEST, DUKE OF SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA,

Do, in consideration of the change made in the titles and relations of rank during the course of time, particularly because of the extension made in the predicate 'Serene Highness,' and the increasing injury arising therefrom to the rights of honour conceded to the Dukes of Saxony, consider it fit and necessary to raise the rank and worth of our Ducal Houses by means of an alteration in the above-mentioned predicate, and are therefore bound by the following House and Family resolutions:

ART. I.—The reigning Dukes of Saxony, their heirs—presumptive and direct descendants of the first generation, will henceforth assume the predicate 'Highness,' instead of that of 'Ducal Serene Highness,' which they have hitherto borne.

ART. II.—The brothers of the reigning Duke of Saxe-Altenburg, as well as Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha will also receive the same predicate.

ART. III.—This raising of predicate is to be promulgated at the same time in the Duchies of Saxe-Meiningen, Saxe-Altenburg and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, also all foreign Courts will be notified thereof, and it will be announced to the German Confederate Assembly by all the envoys of the German Diet.

In witness whereof we have had the present House and

Family resolution drawn up in the copies of the same tenour, and completed it with our own hand, by prefixing thereto our Ducal seal.

Altenburg, April 15th, 1844.
Meiningen, April 2nd, 1844.
Coburg, April 10th, 1844.

L. S. JOSEPH, D. OF S.
L. S. BERNHARD ERICH FREUND, D. OF S.
L. S. ERNEST, D. OF S.

We looked for a storm of some kind, but we did not expect that the affair would give rise to such lasting and persevering excitement as it did amongst the German Powers. In these days the matter no doubt appears too unimportant for it to be followed throughout all its stages. I expressed my opinion at the time in a letter to King Leopold, which ran as follows:—'Of course you have not remained ignorant of the intense excitement caused by the adoption of the title "Highness," and how people are trying on all sides either not to acknowledge this step at all, or at any rate to speak very unfavourably of it, and make things very unpleasant. Let them do as they will. The business is an accomplished fact, and must be considered as such, and whoever says *a*, must say *b* also.'

We knew very well beforehand that, as we had had the boldness to leave out the little word 'Ducal' before 'Highness,' contrary to the express wish of both great Cabinets, we should hear from them in not exactly a friendly manner. But that the remaining German Confederate States, to whom we sent our notification, would also make no answer, was not exactly what we had expected.

Under these circumstances, I could build hopes only on the recognition of the title by the Courts of Paris, London and Brussels, but the very fact that this was the case, gave rise to fresh difficulties concerning the translation of the word 'Highness,' and the circumstance that no corresponding expression could be found in diplomatic language for the usual and strictly distinct Highnesses, was still seriously

occupying the Cabinet of Germany as well as at length the German Diet also, as late as the following August.

When one thinks of these things nowadays, one has the feeling that the year 1848 cut a deep notch in the constitution as well as in the handling of State affairs, and one can hardly understand the excitement occasioned by this pure matter of form.

It went so far in Berlin, that the army was forbidden by a special order, to give the Saxon Dukes, even in private, any other title than 'Serene Highness.' The diplomatic world calmed itself only by degrees about this affair, and my wise uncle in Brussels had prophesied rightly when, as early as the 3rd of June, he wrote:

'The proverb "All's well that ends well" may be applied to this case.'

In a few years the Saxon Dukes' much quarrelled about title had become as much naturalised as if they had never borne any other, and many who do not give themselves up with equal zeal to historical minutiæ, will wonder to-day how the German Diet could grow angry over them at a time when signs were being given of far more serious conflicts than the petty storms in a glass of water which antiquated policy raised at that time.

Before I enter, at this point, into an objective representation of the universal condition of Europe and Germany, which preceded and heralded the revolutionary movement, it will be permitted me to furnish some information concerning my personal affairs, and to mention a few events which occurred in my own territories during the first years of my reign.

On the 31st of March I met my brother, who had come from England to Gotha.

This first painful meeting after the death of my father gave us an opportunity to confer seriously about the wants of both countries, the political relations of Germany, and the ground which I was to break during my government.

I must not conceal the fact that we differed on many points, and that my brother was by no means inclined to consent to an energetic rule, such as I adopted immediately

afterwards for the perfection of the constitutional system. Then, and in later years, he opposed the separation of state and family matters, which I had from the first looked upon as unavoidable, and still clung to the thought that the patriarchal rule, which in German States was still most decidedly shown in income and questions of domain, could be kept up.

Whoever judges and describes Prince Albert from his letters and official speeches and documents only, when all are dead who knew him, can give but a one-sided picture of his prominent but singularly formed character.

What almost wonderful antitheses slumbered in his nature, what contradictions warred in his honourable mind, will never be imagined from the descriptions which even at the present day appear to be most thought of.

His mild amiability really went hand in hand with a critical severity, which seemed like a psychological enigma. The greatest warmth and self-sacrificing love would sometimes change to painful coldness, and he often stood on the brink of what is so alluring to the high and mighty, that of allowing himself opinions and views which are wont to arise from contempt of mankind in the abstract.

Yet, I never met with anyone, during my whole life, who had more feeling for mankind.

Everything beautiful and noble which has ever been understood under the words 'a philanthropic soul,' lived in him. His constant thought was how to make people happy, and he could be as hard as possible to those same people. It was then that all his sharp, logical reasoning came into powerful play; he dissected the intentions and actions of others with unmerciful dialectics, it seemed as if the rich register of feeling in his heart could be silenced with a touch, like the swell of an organ.

But if he was in the habit of mercilessly criticising political, as well as artistic and scientific things, yet the friend who knew him intimately could never mistake the good roots which had grown in a wrong direction through too deep thought.

His nature was inimical to all dimidiation, he despised untruth and phrasemaking. Just because he thus saw through the weakness of men and their works more quickly and felt them more strongly, the battle of life made him rougher and more positive in his judgments.

The very fact that he wound himself up more and more in his own doctrines made him only too often lose the natural pleasure and satisfaction with which he might otherwise have regarded his own creations.

I am far from saying that my brother's magnificently endowed character was so altered by English life and manners; but one portion of a letter of King Leopold's, written with an entirely different meaning and in entirely different relations, recurs to me:

'The English have no idea of what the words "to be glad" mean; if they laugh, it is over the laceration of a fellow-citizen; if a festival, which is always looked upon as work, is successful, they say "it went off very well," as if they were speaking of an accomplished task. In America it is said to be still worse, and a joyous person a rarity.'

It gives rise to the reflection that they nevertheless adhere to the aim of life, as this gift of heaven must not be used in an exaggerated manner. But if it may seem probable at first sight, that the hard surroundings of English ways could bring about so great a change in a kindly German Prince, yet I cannot doubt that it was caused by an entirely different influence, which brought the hardness in my brother's disposition to the surface.

Historical literature during the past years has placed Stockmar's name in a light which can, on the whole, be no other than a pleasing one. It is seldom that posterity does justice to the works of men who have not played a great part in the public positions of State or on the parliamentary benches. Only too often, the quiet influence which sometimes faithful servants, sometimes honest friends, or secret counsellors immediately exercise over great events, is forgotten amidst the tumult of public opinion.

If, therefore, the far-reaching activity of a man like

Stockmar, were, so to speak, firmly established by the most celebrated writers, it could be regarded only with real pleasure, as an addition to the knowledge of the history of the times. But for the very reason that Stockmar ranks in the list of indisputably historical personages, it seems as if one is justified in giving a more correct picture of everything concerning this excellent man. On obtaining a nearer view of things, one cannot deny that Stockmar's hand often appeared to give more than it ever really offered. I am not aware whether anyone has ever written in history about the political dilettantism of medical scientists. But it is certain that, both in former and present times, there have been many physicians who, through their practice amongst princely personages and statesmen, have made more or less energetic researches in the department of politics. Stockmar also belongs to this list of almost invariably remarkable and historically most interesting persons and characters.

The part played by Stockmar, entirely apart from his personal relations to our House, at Frankfort in the year 1848, lifts him for ever above the generality of the men of his time, and many of his treatises and newspaper articles were distinguished by a clearness rare in Germany at that time.

He was penetrating, rich in attainments and gifted with a certain personal power of presentiment. But his aptitude, close observation and knowledge of the affairs and events of State were borrowed from a small circle of refined, highly educated and enlightened persons, who were, however, not always looked upon by the world as being decisive forces.

As a council of physicians regards laymen of both high and low rank with contempt, and at the most, smilingly looks upon anyone outside of their charmed circle who pretends to any knowledge of their science, so Stockmar handled political business matters, and judged mankind.

This mode of thought gave the greatest stimulus to the *doctrinaire* vein which my brother already possessed in our student years. Both of them grew more and more disapproving in their judgment of the aristocratic, as well as the meaner

political sphere, which boldly invaded life and practised there.

As such vocations, in which the learned man is easily distinguished from the layman, easily develop a certain haughtiness, so a certain spirit of caste appeared in Stockmar's circle, which almost pretended to infallibility.

Stockmar's peculiar position in our house allowed him continually to appear as a counsellor, but he was never held responsible for anything which might happen; he was a faithful companion, like the chorus in a Greek tragedy, but he could never have been a responsible servant who would have answered for his master's deeds, or made open war for his own ideas.

If, during the first years of my rule, I complained to King Leopold about everything which surrounded me, how I had found many a public institution decaying from neglect, I may add that in no way were things made easier for me. A proof of this is furnished by a letter which I wrote on the 12th of April 1845.

'We are, that is, I am, for one thing, busy trying by means of organic improvements, to pull much out of the mire which seems to have been intentionally allowed to get stuck fast in it.

'Unfortunately it is we who must often taste the fruit of old sins, and so much of the public body lies ill. I have carried out a great deal during the past few years, and have at least succeeded in re-establishing the trust which had been entirely withdrawn from us, and my good-will and firm intention to continue in this path have been recognised.

'A great deal more ought to have been done, but, with few exceptions, I am badly supported, and my good old Lepel cannot forget either, that he once wore a *queue*. We have to fight against the want of the most necessary means as well as of intelligence.'

The organic improvements, which I mentioned in this letter, referred to the administration and the constitution. Very soon after my brother had left home again, in the beginning of April, 1844, weighty difficulties arose in both Coburg and Gotha concerning the different classes of both Duchies. In

Coburg, where the constitution was liberal, the arrangement of the domain question gave rise to disputes. In Gotha, on the other hand, a positive war was waged against the ranks of lord and knight, which, with the narrow-mindedness usual to these, opposed every change in the constitution.

As regards the administration, on the 24th of July and the 1st of August, I had, by means of an ordinance, brought about a complete separation between private ducal and state affairs. The Ministry received the appellation of a 'Ducal States Ministry,' and was released from the guidance of the personal and private matters which concerned the reigning Prince. In consequence of this, an almost entirely new appointment amongst the higher officials was found to be necessary, and I may add that the choice of persons was by no means easy.

Up to that time, Freiherr von Lepel had stood at the head of the Ministry, a man who, although of large experience in state matters, was as little suited as he was inclined to retain the leadership of affairs. He was not only opposed to every innovation in the administration, and every change in government organisation, but knew how to impede the proposals of representative arrangements which I had in view. This led to a positive stoppage in the transactions of the States Assembly, in the year 1845, and when I wished to insist upon the carrying out of my intentions, Lepel requested leave to retire.

I am still in possession of the documents in which this conservative man gives the motives for his withdrawal, and although the amount of matter is too considerable for me to give it all here, yet, what he wrote in December 1845, is too significant of the time immediately preceding the year 1845, for me not to give at least a part of it: he said he 'looked upon it as a great evil, that in most of the German States representative constitution after the English and French pattern had been adopted. The smaller the States are, the greater is the hindrance of such a constitution for their government. Meanwhile, in those where such is already in existence, as in the Duchy of Coburg, they must indeed be

maintained, but every extension of States' rights, every further contraction of government power, is dangerous; for concessions such as these cannot be repealed.

'The attempt is made on the part of the Commons, or, what is as a rule the same thing, on that of the Liberals, to call it by the fine name of continued cultivation of the constitutional principle, but in reality it is nothing more than to govern co-operatively, or to procure the decision of contested questions of administration through the civil courts, where one may be certain that out of ten cases, nine will be decided to the disadvantage of the Government.

'It is this which gives rise to the ceaseless attempts to intimidate and bind the servants of the State, and particularly the higher members of the administration, by means of laws of responsibility, whereas the different classes will be answerable only to their God and to their consciences.

'Well knowing what the late most high lord wished to give us by means of the constitution of 1827, and what he did give us, I have not only justified myself in opposing the claims of the different classes, but have held it as my duty so to act; the measure of what I can make up my mind to grant by those to whom I have yielded in this respect is full.

'If your Highness has the intention of granting still more, I do not wish, as I have several times plainly declared, to have any part in it, and for this reason alone would be obliged most humbly to beg to be allowed to ask for my pension.'

Lepel's other grounds for retiring from the service of the State arose principally from the innovations with regard to affairs of administration. He closed his document with an attestation which I willingly accepted, as it ran thus:—'Your Highness has a strong leaning towards the Liberal side, and I am Conservative through and through.

'Your Highness is hasty in forming decisions, and would like to see them carried out with equal promptitude; I honour the maxim "hasten slowly"; I like to consider a matter deliberately, and unwillingly make up my mind to a change before I feel convinced of its usefulness.

'Your Highness allows yourself to be easily led to make

exceptions through the impression of the moment; I am consistent to the verge of obstinacy. Your Highness would like to see all hindrances and considerations put aside, but I discover them everywhere, and therefore hesitate to dispose of them. Moreover, I am too old to change.'

The person who reads these lines to-day will not doubt that the success of my plans taught the lesson that it would have been no misfortune for Germany if, before the stormy years, our Princes had been 'more strongly inclined to the Liberal side.' But in the year 1845 it was made so difficult to lead matters into a channel suited to the times, that even my brother was very unhappy about my conflict with Lepel.

'Lepel's withdrawal,' he wrote, on the 17th of December 1846, 'I *regret* intensely; he had the inestimable qualities of honour, experience, economy, and great consistency, which are difficult to find united in one man.'

My chief care was now to the domain question in a constitutional manner with the assistance of the Diet.

I therefore laid before the Assembly a bill according to which 'the income arising from the patrimonial nature of the possession of crown-lands was, without injury to itself, to contribute to the defrayment of the cost of the States' administration according to a regulated assessment.'

The conditions which the carrying out of this principle individually illustrated, gave rise in August 1846 to very excited debates. The Commons strove to prove as circumstantially as possible that the land had rights to our demesnes to such an extent, that the yearly demand could not be met by the combined incomes of these possessions. The Commons also wished, as it were only out of a sense of justice, to make an equal division of the net profits of the crown-lands between the land and the Prince, and I could not assent to having my voluntary proposition amended in this way.

'We think rather,' so ran the rescript of the Government to the Commons, 'that it is Our duty in the position of Lord of the Land, as well as that of the land itself, in consideration of the equitableness to us, as has been hinted by the Commission

of the classes, to renounce voluntarily, and would, accordingly, in case the Assembly of our faithful Commons were to approve of the above mentioned views entertained by their chosen Commission, honestly regret to see Ourselves forced to the necessity of withdrawing Our proposition on account of the resignation of a quota of the net profits of Our crown-lands to the State Treasury; but if, on the other hand, Our faithful Commons will renounce the pretended claims of the country to the income of the crown-lands, we will again make and carry out Our proposal in a constitutional manner. For the more inclined we were to make the sacrifice, willingly imposed upon Ourselves, to grant Our faithful subjects here a considerable alleviation, the less would it agree with our maxims of government to admit a pretension on the part of Our faithful Commons, which, according to its meaning, would impose upon the land the duty of withdrawing all just demands on Our favour.'

Meantime the Diet broke up without having attained any result, and at its reopening on the 12th of November 1846, there was no unanimity on the subject. Only at its dismissal, on the 5th of July 1847, was I able to express my pleasure at the fact that the proposal with regard to the crown-lands had been thoroughly settled, and the law concerning the contributions of the same towards the expenses of Government accepted.

As, during the same session, a law touching the responsibility of State officials with regard to violations of the constitution, and a new order of election had been established, one might well say that in the little Duchy of Coburg all constitutional guarantees, which were stormily disputed over in the large States during the following years, had been most amply provided.

The constitutional question in the Duchy of Gotha was meantime developing far less favourably. When, in the winter of 1846, I had summoned the Diet, I opened with a speech which plainly expressed my wish to revise the entire constitutional form of Government. Both in and out of Germany, my words were taken as a promise in the matter,

and my brother wrote to me somewhat anxiously and timorously about it:

'I read your speech on the opening of the Gotha Assembly with much interest. I only hope that the passage: "If it should come to pass that we should wish for universal changes in the honourable forms inherited from our forefathers, and by which our land is now represented," may not lead to any misunderstanding; the newspapers have at once perceived in this the promise of a new Constitution, and it has also been thus accepted by the English Press.'

Even at the State Assembly, the feudal body of the Counts and the Knighthood sharply opposed my proposition, and, besides this, the smallest possible amount of interest was shown in certain circles of the citizens of Gotha. I should have been driven to the necessity of bluntly overthrowing the existing Constitution, if I had persisted in my intention.

But this old States' Constitution was of 'recognised lawful efficiency,' and had a complaint been laid before the German Diet by the Commons, as happened ten years later, this languishing body would not have hesitated a moment to proscribe the views and reforms of a Prince who was penetrated by the conviction that only in quiet times can one really and beneficially alter an unenduring and antiquated condition of things and remains of the Middle Ages, and that one must go to meet the coming storm, whose signs are not to be mistaken.

As things were, the obstinacy shown in all German regulations, and particularly the State matters in Gotha, drove us without any hope of salvage into the Revolution.

For my part, after my intended path had been blocked up by one hindrance after the other, which could not be set aside, and as I had a good political conscience, I had no need to feel any fear whatever concerning the unknown dangers of a clearly foreseen movement. I still knew that I had some ideas which were ahead of the times, and I only wished that everyone in Germany, where the greatest excitement and bad feeling increased day by day could say the same.

From my point of view I also needed, as far as was possible to the government of a small country, according to

the laws of the Confederacy and the constitution, to shrink from no popular impulse, or to hinder it. The Press enjoyed the greatest possible freedom, and as early as July 1844 the Thuringian *Sängerbund* could give undisturbed expression to every German song of freedom or unity in Gotha.

As politics would not make any immediate progress, I at once attempted to work in the interest of the land in some other way. All intellectual elements in Gotha were supported by me in every way; the material advancement of the country gained a powerful impulse through the formation of the Thuringian railway. The completion and opening of this railroad in the year 1847 was all the more gladly welcomed in our lands as, even amongst the lowest grades of the people, the great worth of the railway in this year of scarcity and dearth was at once recognised and understood. The greatest exertions were also made by my Government in the year 1845 to bring about the construction of the Werra-railroad; to my great vexation the matter was long delayed by the useless and partly shortsighted preliminaries of the Bavarian and Meiningen Governments.

It was clear on the whole that in the smallest States of Germany also, no great step could be taken as long as Prussia and Austria were working in entirely opposite directions.

As things in Prussia seemed to banish all hope of a better future, the opinion that we were on the eve of a revolution grew stronger and stronger. How this developed and was transplanted to Germany will be told in another chapter. At the close of this one, a letter written by me to King Leopold on the 6th of March 1847 shall be inserted, as it perhaps characterises the situation rather well, and at the same time gives vent to the discouragement daily arising from the political proceedings of Prussia.

'Your letter convinces me again of an old observation, that Prussia's King and her statesmen still fancy themselves in the last century. They cannot grasp a really constitutional idea, and still think that one can be monarchist to-day, and liberal democrat to-morrow, just as one pleases,—in a word, that they can act despotically.

'Everything which occurs in Prussia bears this character and this is why the present state of things is dangerous. The German race emancipates itself slowly, but it progresses surely. The universal ideas of popular representation, noise and publicity are continually gaining more ground, and are no longer to be repressed. A constitutional administration is being sought for as much as a protection against despotism, as inversely as a victory of the monarchy over the latter. Most German Princes are foolish despots either openly, or under the cloak of Liberalism.

'But few can understand the real meaning of a monarch according to our modern States' law, and amongst these the King of Prussia will not be found, any more than the King of Bavaria. Constitutional life will assume a different development in Germany, from that of France or England, and her internal politics will therefore have a different character.

'We shall not need to live much longer in order to realise that many a secret plot which has been hatched in German Cabinets can no longer be carried out, as no means can be found with which to do so.

'According to experience, when fire breaks out, it will do so during the coming years in Austria. The fuel is being heaped up, and the people in the States belonging to the old Houses will want to take the leap suddenly, which the rest of Germany is taking by degrees.

'Apart from the frightful dearth, we live here in happy quiet.

'The Thuringian is obstinate, it is true, but he is also a very reflecting, steady man. The good traits of the German are really shown in him.

'We are about to open the railroad here.'

CHAPTER VI

THE YEAR 1848.—PARIS THE REAL BATTLEFIELD OF REVOLUTION.—LOUIS BLANC.—INFECTION OF GERMAN WORKMEN WITH REPUBLICAN THEORIES.—PRUSSIA AGAIN LOOKED TO TO REGENERATE GERMANY.—FREDERICK WILLIAM IV.—HIS VACILLATION.—THE CONSTITUTIONAL WAR.—THE KING OF PRUSSIA LED BY METTERNICH AND THE CZAR.—THE ROYAL ORDINANCE.—KING LEOPOLD'S VIEW OF THE SITUATION.—ASSEMBLY OF THE DIET.—THE DUKE VISITS BERLIN.—ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT.—PRINCE ALBERT'S LETTER TO THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—WARNINGS FROM BAVARIA AND BADEN.—BECK ENTERS THE MINISTRY.—BREAD RIOTS AT STUTTGART.—RADOWITZ: HIS CHARACTER.—BUNSEN.—PRINCE ALBERT'S ATTEMPT TO GAIN PERSONAL INFLUENCE OVER THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—URGES HIM TO ADOPT MODERN STATE IDEAS.—MEMORIAL OF 11TH SEPTEMBER.—THE DUKE VISITS HUNGARY, ETC.—KING LEOPOLD'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH METTERNICH.—THE AUSTRIAN POLICY THRICE DEFEATED.

THE events of the year 1848 were foreseen by many skilled politicians, and plainly prophesied by more than one of them. During the first year of my rule I had, apart from my extensive correspondence, the opportunity of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the condition of almost all European countries by means of immediate observation.

My opinion of the public relations of most of the States was a very hopeless one, and I expressed it in more than one of my letters. Meanwhile, I admit having a conviction that it would not have developed into an enduring and successful movement in most places, as was shown in the year 1848, if the Orleans in France had not so completely worn themselves out.

Paris was without doubt to be regarded as the real battlefield of the revolution. One can hardly form any idea

nowadays of the measure in which France dominated over and influenced political thoughts and actions immediately before the year 1848. The masses of the people were much more roused by radical and socialistic teaching than is generally admitted.

Louis Blanc had, during the past decade, found an enormous and perhaps as extensive a circle in Germany for his doctrines as in France, and the translations of radical French writings had been diffused amongst even the lower classes of citizens, in spite of all censure and measures of prevention. I can well remember that even during the very earliest years of my reign, I often found occasion to wonder how, under such relatively smally developed means of intercourse, it was possible, even in the smallest and most hidden spots, to print books and pamphlets, whose existence was a continual subject of care to both secret and public police.

A second important matter was added to this, which was still more difficult to remedy. Many German workmen had been occupied in Paris during the past twenty years. They were received into the secret societies, and had now and then won high grades in them, returning to Germany as they grew older and propagating the radical doctrines with all the more success, as advanced France had been everywhere recommended by the educated classes of Germany as a pattern of State administration.

Many of these workmen had taken part in the July Revolution, and had appeared in after days in their birthplaces, surrounded with the halo of soldiers who had fought for liberation. I remember a shoemaker named Ludwig, and a master-locksmith named Menzel in Gotha, with whom I came into personal contact in the days of the disturbance. They were members of the Marianne Society in Paris, and always found a grateful and admiring audience to listen to their radical and sometimes revolutionary speeches.

In manufacturing towns and districts on the Rhine and in Saxony, so it was asserted, the secret societies of France played a still greater part.

I was by no means so horrified by these things, as was

the paralysing case in many other seats of government, but I was of the opinion that something must be done in order to lead the oppressed political existence into other paths.

But how could this be possible? As regarded the landed and educated classes, the promises made in the year 1815 had in no case been fulfilled, and had excited a great feeling of distrust, to which the mistaken way in which youth was restricted by means of demagogical stratagems added a great deal of bitterness. Moreover the lawfully founded constitutions of the Governments were looked upon by most of the reigning heads not only as a continual source of vexation, but as a danger to the State as well. They had neither the quiet nor the strong will to allow political life, which was still in its childhood and wished to go through the list of childish ailments, to develop naturally.

In the parliaments there was much misunderstood constitutionalism and liberalism. The Opposition rarely rose against the world of Government officials, but concealed a sting which at times wounded the Princes in their good intentions. Instead of the sovereigns seeing in the Opposition a controlling power over the official world, they felt themselves threatened, and there were not wanting some who discovered a Republican spirit and pictured the dangers as increasing. Whilst it was growing plainer and plainer, that great rules of measure could proceed from the preponderating Powers alone, in order to place German political relations in a more favourable position, we began to grow accustomed to the entire impossibility of a regeneration for Germany in connection with polyglot Austria, and to turn our gaze more and more on Prussia.

Thus since 1840, everyone had been anxiously and impetuously waiting for the rescuing deed of Frederick William IV. Finally, however, the King, hastening from one extreme to the other, only succeeded in preventing anyone from having the slightest idea what his aim and opinion really might be. Only later was the physiological enigma solved which this Prince had presented in his person by the continually begun and never ended actions of his reign.

No one nowadays thinks of reproaching the King for not

showing himself in the first years of his reign, by his constitutional atonements, to be an admirer of that constitutional model which had often been passed upon Germany in blind imitation of the Western administrations of Europe. Certainly no one blames the King for having had historical panegyrists who valued his disinclination to represent a vulgar constitutionalism as being a kind of farseeing clearsightedness, and who moreover inform us that he was far ahead of his contemporaries in recognising the wants of this system.

On the other hand, one may oppose to this idea the fact that if the King wished to infuse something new or essentially different into political life, an uncommon degree of energy and strong will would have been necessary to enable him to do so.

When, however, a ruler is in such great need of these qualities as was Frederick William IV, his merit diminishes greatly for having wished to possess something which was not exactly according to the pattern of State laws, and will easily make the impression on the nation that he is obstinate about having his own way. Nor must we mistake the fact that there is always something doubtful about wishing to decide from the throne which is the best form of state. Even in the past century, when monarchs still had so much more power, and were met by so much more confidence than nowadays, as many rulers were ruined by trying to construct forms of state. How much more must a Prussian King, surrounded by existing constitutional regulations, and who had only to redeem his word, which had been given ten years before, be wrecked by innovations of principle in the department of regulations relating to the public law. At the best, one may say that he could not be understood.

I will touch but slightly upon the events of the constitutional war, when the King, after the stormy demands of the Provincial Assembly of Königsberg and Stettin in the year 1842, first brought forward his unlucky idea of the union of class committees.

'This union,' said the King on August 19th 1842, 'is a development of the class institutions, such as those given by His Majesty my late father after ripe reflection concerning

the wants of his people, as it supplies the element of unity to the class advice of single provinces.

'The independent preservation of the separate divisions of the country is fully insured by the provincial, communal and county class constitutions, but a point of union had hitherto been wanting in order to bring about a balance in the anomalous interests everywhere where such a balance was shown to be necessary for the common weal of the State, and to produce the co-operation of class organs where the sovereign esteemed it necessary to do so by the speediest means possible. This point of union has now been laid before the committees.'

It is now universally known from Bunsen's published papers, that the King's principal point of view was to allow no State of the Empire to be decided by class committees. He had formed the extraordinary plan in May 1845, of summoning the entire provincial classes to a universal assembly in Brandenburg, and to declare to them that this would also be summoned in future during any great events of the monarchy.

Among the circle of politicians who surrounded the King, there was formerly an idea of the particular predestination of the nature and the state of the Germanic nations. The representative system which began in 1789, was attacked as a growth of Romanism, and although even Bunsen had to admit, that this form stands like a ghost which cannot be banished behind every Germanic Government, which the historical class constitution had not skill and courage enough to restore unreservedly once and for all, at the right time that is, before being forced to do so, the King still lacked full power to give his pet plan the realisation of a historical-Germanic original constitution. Fear of Austria and Russia were the chief reasons for the paralysing of his will.

Finding little belief accorded by the two allied Powers to his promises earnestly to oppose every attempt to naturalise the principles of 1789 in Germany, he allowed himself to be completely led by Metternich's dilatory counsels, and intimidated by the Emperor Nicholas. How entirely this was the case, was shown by the King's conference with Lord Aberdeen on the 10th of August 1845, of which Bunsen has given us a

description. Characteristically enough, Frederick William IV expected Austria to allow him the benefit of 'his co-operation' in the constitutional question. Aberdeen assured him, however, that he had not understood the King, and when he spoke to Prince Metternich a few days afterwards, he was in doubt whether the latter had repulsed the King's ideas concerning the Empire, or if he himself did not know what was to be done. Metternich expressed himself more plainly in Frankfort, where Lord Aberdeen found him in much better spirits than he had been before having a fresh conference with the King. 'It seems that the plan for the constitution has been challenged, I even hope that he has entirely given it up.'

As Metternich is reported to have said: 'There is no longer any question of the constitution in Prussia, I have done away with that project,' at the same date in Johannisberg, one cannot doubt that it was the King's want of decision which brought about the deluge attendant on the constitutional question, which caused the matter to be resisted in Prussia, and not internal difficulties, as has been maintained by a senile historical work.

It was part of Frederick William IV's character to be intentionally mysterious, in order to retain freedom of action in every direction. Added to this, it was his secret opinion that his own cleverness exceeded that of everyone else.

Only on the 3rd of February 1847, appeared the Royal Ordinances, treating of the arrangements of State and solving the question of the state of the Empire by means of the construction of a united assembly from all the jurisdictions of the provinces. Thus the King's most remarkable projection of constitution, which he had been cherishing for years, as is known in modern history, was brought into existence in a manner entirely unexpected by the masses, and was in no way satisfactory. My prognostic concerning all this delay, all these half-measures, I expressed to my uncle Leopold in the following words:

'The political horizon of Germany is steadily growing darker; the Liberals are victorious, and the Princes for the

most part blind. In Austria, Prince Metternich is dying politically as well as bodily. Storms are already brewing in Prussia, the air is so heavy, that the sovereign himself can no longer breathe as freely as formerly. Everything is preparing for an immediate struggle. Prospects are really very bad.'

King Leopold it must be admitted, adopted a somewhat more conservative point of view concerning these events and relations, than we younger men, and he consequently looked upon things differently, yet much more darkly and doubtfully.

He never was a man, as has sometimes been assumed, to habitually wrap himself in the learned and lawful mantle of constitutional doctrine. He was accustomed to look at political relations from a practical point of view, estimating the value of their results and judging them with regard to their consequences.

'The Prussian Constitution, after all, looks quite innocent, will it remain so?'—he writes on the 27th of February, and in a letter of the 6th April, he says:—'What will be preferred in Germany cannot yet be decided; if the Prussian orders content themselves with what is offered them, and if no regularly fixed period is established for their reassembly, it will do good for a time only. Yet Assemblies are not so easy to manage after a time as they are in the beginning. The National Assembly of 1790 was gentle and good, and in January 1793 King Louis XVI was quite decently guillotined: it is not very encouraging.

'As, however, the King talks to the people so much about progressing, it must lead to something. As, however, the earth is round, one is bound some day to begin to go backwards. That does not matter, it only proves that humility is most natural to the children of the earth.'

Meanwhile, in spite of all preventive measures and contradictions on the part of the Liberals of the country, the Diet had assembled on the 10th of April 1847, and offered the German people, for at least the first time, the sight of a great parliamentary body. Many speeches were made, and much work done by the corporations and commissions, and a list of

splendid personages first made their appearance here, who have formed epochs in the destiny of Germany.

In the year 1846 as well as in 1847 I stayed some time in Berlin, and stood by the cradle of the political operations of most of the men who founded the later constitutional life of Germany. Besides, I had already known many of the members of the nobility for a long time.

As I looked on for a while in May 1847 at the political performances, I was not able to doubt for a moment that my uncle in Brussels was perfectly right in what he foretold concerning the Assemblies.

I had relations with Prince Lichnovsky, of whom I thought a great deal, in spite of many warnings which had reached me from all sides, and also from my relatives. He was of an energetic nature such as had never been too frequent in Germany. He was plainly and certainly intended for a greater political range. If, in spite of all these favourable traits, there was anything to his disadvantage it was his defective education and his love of adventure.

In the circles of the noble members of the Diet, where Lichnovsky was looked upon as the leader of an advanced mode of thought, there was little hope that the King would make any further concessions. Even a binding promise concerning the periodical resuming of the transaction of the Diet was not expected of him.

I must not, by the bye, omit to make mention of a man whose name was uttered by the whole world with love and esteem. I mean Alexander von Humboldt, whom I had learned to know well years before, and whose sympathy and liking I had now, to my great delight. He gave me many interesting hints with regard to politics also, and in after years called my attention to many matters.

Meanwhile the wits of Berlin had everywhere made themselves masters of the King's speeches and supposed utterances, and in the Chambers one proposal after the other was made, with a view to helping the doubtful embryo to a fine constitutional birth, over which Frederick William IV gave vent to the bitterest irony. The Jews caused him the

most anxiety thereby; for the beautiful ideas of the Christian character of his creation filled him with the greatest pleasure and with equally great, though unfortunately transitory, pride.

It is not my intention to follow the progress of the debates and decisions one by one. When the Diet of the Assemblies was closed on the 26th of June, after the King, irritated and showing signs of the deepest anxiety for the possible consequences of his undertaking, had gone to Silesia, one saw that the whole project was wrecked; a revolutionary tendency began to show itself everywhere, one could trace the reaction in the smaller States.

In Hesse the Elector made preparations to put the constitution aside. I myself had not advanced a step with the Commons in the Gotha constitutional question.

Prussia's influence also showed itself in the fact that people like Blittersdorf, Hassenpflug, etc., were everywhere supported. Thus it came to pass that, after the fall of the former in Baden, Frederick William IV showed no faint desire to intimidate the movements of Parliament by transferring the troops. He wanted to place a Prussian brigade privately at the disposal of the Grand-Duke. All this happened in consequence of Welcker's appearance on the scene.

Perhaps this is now the time to insert a hitherto unpublished letter written by my brother to the King, and which refers in the first part to the events of all Germany, but the principal aim of which is to attempt to lead the King into a better path with regard to the constitutional question.

My brother reposed great confidence in King Frederick William, and clung to the thought that the regeneration of the single States and of all Germany must go out from him. He wrote thus, one might say, in the last hour before the flood.

'*Osborne*, 12*th Dec.* 1847.

'YOUR MAJESTY,—I am only too eager on the receipt of your most gracious and confidential letter of the 6th of last month, immediately to return my warmest thanks for this fresh proof of your friendship. Nothing could recompense me

better and, at the same time, encourage me more than the assurance that "my memorial to me is—with the exception of two portions—the written expression of my own thoughts."

'If I unintentionally omitted to satisfy this desire, it was because, feeling the necessity of coming to an understanding on *all* points with your Majesty, and of knowing that we both agreed, I had had the intention of sending you a larger answer, in which my brother-in-law's, von Leiningen's views, which have been misunderstood by your Majesty, would have been more completely developed. And even now, before I see through this matter clearly, a fresh and, for Germany at least, a still more dangerous event has happened, which drives me to beg you *first of all* to take immediate steps against this danger, yes, to implore you to do so.

'I mean the threatened overthrow of the Hessian constitution.

'Indeed, I share with your Majesty the cares concerning the radical social ferment in Europe, and particularly in Germany, as well as concerning the impulse which this movement must receive from the victory of the Radicals in Switzerland.

'Here, too, they have shown wherein their power consists, namely in their numbers and the strangely firm link between political, social and religious—that is, anti-religious—principles, by which they are driven to oppose the State and the Church, both of which are in a *remarkable* state of indecision and want of unanimity concerning their own calling and their mutual relations.

'But it is my firm conviction the *only* way in which this threatening pressure may be met, is to bind the moneyed and intelligent portion of the people (that is, the real people) to the Government by means of confidential admittance to a part of the administration of its own land, whereas this people, as long as it is kept divided from the Government, has neither the interest nor the capability to stand by it in its unequal struggle; yet, it cannot forbear, even over the possible defeat of a bureaucracy which it hates, (hates because it sees itself shut out by it from its proper activity and all immediate

intercourse with its Prince) it cannot forbear, being secretly pleased to offer itself on account of this very restraint as a fulcrum for radicalism, in spite of the latter's plans of demolition.

'But if it is *unwise* of a government to refuse this certain means of safety which stands ready at hand, how much more insane does it seem to wish to keep this means under where it has already existed, and—I may say—to force the *people itself*,—not the radical party—through an attack on its already political right of activity, to lawful insurrection. Could the bad spirit of revolution, and at the same time the bitterest enemy of Germany, wish for a better ally than a Prince who let himself be led to make such attacks?

'Would this not be a foolhardy provocation of the radicalism which is yet drunk with the victory of its success in Switzerland, to a fight with the principle of monarchy, particularly when the representative of the same is most decidedly in the wrong and who would have the public opinion of all Europe against him? The moment is certainly badly chosen in which, after so many former accidents, to remind the German people again that in Germany it was not the peoples, but the princes, who began to overthrow what already stood, and that the source of the *present* monarchical principle, which represents itself as being *legitimate* and historical, is, nevertheless, in fact, no other than an imitation of *French absolutism*, as it was devolved by Richelieu and Mazarin, and by Louis XIV, and placed on exhibition, above the ruins of the rights of the classes and the people of ancient history.

'In Germany, as your Majesty knows even better than I, these rights remained almost everywhere untouched until the treaty of Westphalia, and I cannot look upon a demand for the same on the part of the German peoples, and where they have been restored, a courageous clinging to them, as French and radical, but as truly German and conservative.

'In the present case of Hesse, your Majesty knows from the documents, that a lessening or annulling of the class constitution bestowed by the late Elector, and documentarily ratified by his successor, would be a manifest breach of your

Princely word. For if one supposes that a sovereign is not bound by the promises and actions of his predecessor, a principle would be destroyed which I look upon as the chief basis of monarchy, the principle, namely, that 'the king never dies,' or '*le roi est mort, vive le roi.*'

'A State, whose constitution would be at the mercy of every change of mind and the arbitrariness of the sovereign, would not prosper any more than the unfortunate Polish optional monarchy, As for the Elector, there is the additional fact that he was Regent with and under the constitution for seventeen years, that same constitution which he now wishes to overthrow, and his own antecedents, as well as those of his father and grandfather are not of a kind to awaken the confidence of a nation in an absolute rule.

'Your Majesty can hardly fail to know, concerning this, that the people of Germany are universal in saying that the Elector's intended overthrow of the constitution is the fulfilment of a condition imposed on him by Prince Metternich, in order to obtain the recognition of the children born of his marriage with Madame Lehmann; for such an object he would pay the price of his people's written Rights and Freedom! Whether this rumour be true or not, the step proposed by him is still a matter which, if anything might ever be described as wrong and godless and 'subversive' in the worst sense of the word, might be thus described.

'On whom, if not on your Majesty, is the gaze of Germany, even of Europe, fixed in this new danger? From whom can Germany expect protection and help except from your Majesty?

'Of you, Most Gracious King, as of the recognised real protector of existing rights, it is hoped that you will oppose with all your might an attempt upon these rights; from you, as the rock of Germany's union and strength, we confidently expect the hindrance of a plan which in Germany, as well between princes and nations, as between the single States themselves, must scatter new seeds of discord; concerning you, as the clearest mirror of German princely honour, we feel convinced that you will try to hold back the hand with which a German

Prince is in the act of spotting and at the same time again endangering the dearest possession of his State, the confidence between prince and people.

'Your Majesty must allow me, for these reasons, as German Prince and politician, to entreat you to take advantage of every means within your power, to prevent an affair which would hinder lawful development of Germany, stain our princely honour, and at this moment fling the firebrand into an already monstrous heap of explosive material.

'Begging your Majesty kindly to excuse the perhaps too violent entreaties of the letter, on account of the necessities of the case, I remain, my Most Gracious King, with grateful submission and sincere attachment, etc., etc.,

'ALBERT.'

I will add, that the entreaties in this letter were chiefly intended to make an impression on the King himself with regard to his own position and constitutional affairs.

It will be shown later on how the idea had occurred to our circles to bring the great German question into play by means of Prussia's influence over the Confederacy; but when Prussia allowed the most absurd measures in the Electorate of Hesse, the reactionary classes in all the small States were protected and encouraged by the authority of the Prussian Great Power, it was nevertheless clear that the combined political operation was devoid of any sound basis.

What with the rebel spirit which had ruled the larger towns of Saxony since 1845, and the half wars in the tolls-union negotiations which had been carried on between Hanover, Brunswick and Prussia since 1843, the Prussian Government, and, before all else, the Prussian King himself, would have had ample grounds for listening to the voices of his friends.

The most earnest warnings to think of Germany's fate, came at that time with ever increasing plainness from the South. Bavaria and Baden made even greater claims on the attention of the German statesmen. Baden was then going through the personal political change of her monarch, and we

had long since grown accustomed to see the agitation for the national questions brought into the immediate consequences of the constitutional strife.

The preponderance of the German-Baden opposition party may be said to date from the retirement of Blittersdorf from the Ministry in 1843. If the wars of the Liberals against Blittersdorf were carried on with great violence, yet he was the man out of whose hands the superior power of the State could never be snatched. But his successors were all weak men.

Nebenius and Rettig had unsuccessfully wasted their last means of becoming masters of the rising movement in the breaking up of the Diets in the year 1846. The Grand-Duke was completely filled by the most loyal wish to reign in peace with the different classes of his Duchy.

Beck's entrance into the Ministry and the opening of the Diets by the Grand-Duke on the 9th of December 1847, gave the Liberals here the superiority, and this fact was of influence far beyond the bounds of the little State.

From the 1st of July 1847, the German newspapers became a common organ for the patriotic Liberals of both north and south, and since the Assembly of Members of the Diets of almost all German States had taken place in Heppenheim in October, people became accustomed to see the first move for a reform of the national mode by the Liberal party.

The German question had already been as it were taken from the hands of the Conservative circles, and above all, of the reigning Powers of Germany. This alliance was of most decisive purport for the further settlement of matters, and a difficulty, if one will, which had not unexpectedly and undeservedly beset the Governments.

As the alliance of the princes had always been hindered in its progress, the world became accustomed to the belief that the restoration of the unity of the States in Germany could only be brought about in spite of the leaders of the Governments, and finally only by democratic means.

And now, ultra-catholic Bavaria had suddenly become a convert to the Liberal side. I have no slight recollection of a

still more surprising political piece of news, the information of Abel's fall in Bavaria. In later time emphasis was placed, and I think rightly, upon the fact that King Louis had already become distrustful of Abel during the Diet of 1846, and the crisis of this Ministry doubtless began with the nomination of Schenk to the post of Minister of Instruction. The peculiar manner, however, in which the liberalism of Munich drove Jesuitical Bavaria out of the field, furnished much food for thought. In any case, a hot war against church tendencies had been brought about by States Councillor Maurer and Prince Wallerstein, who, however, was not really a Liberal, in one part of Germany, where such a thing had least been expected.

In Würtemberg the Liberal Opposition had grown still more inflexible and distrustful through the marriage of the Crown Prince with the daughter of the Emperor Nicholas, and bureaucratic measures against Bischer and Robert Mohl had given rise to bitterness in far-reaching circles.

In the Bread Riots which took place in Stuttgart during the course of the year 1847, a very bad spirit was shown by the people on the interposition of the King. The preceding occurrences in Switzerland were the cause of so great a reaction on the kindred populations of Würtemberg, that in the speech from the throne of the 22nd of January, 1848, it was thought fit to make mention of the same and to attempt some words of appeasal.

Swabian Liberalism might be depicted in still darker colours than that of neighbouring lands; it did not, for the time being, assert itself so noisily as in Baden, but it was more democratic in substance and meaning, and more dangerous in case of a progressive movement. Bureaucracy had been better taught there in former times, and at that moment it held the reins of government even tighter in hand; but amongst the educated classes, the line of connection between nation and dynasty was overstepped far more than anywhere else.

When in these circles one spoke of Germany and her unity, one thought perhaps of more distant days and remoter

times, only the words uttered later, that the King must be rubbed with democratic oil, were quietly but universally repeated.

In the year 1847 I considered North and South Germany to be extraordinarily similarly developed on this point. Particularism, which had certainly not grown weaker otherwise, equalised the opposition between North and South more and more in the decrease of piety and the peculiar attachment of the peoples to their sovereigns. In South Germany particularly there was an unquestionable current of strong republicanism, which presently substantially excelled the desire for German unity.

Meanwhile, the best and most cautious forces were in fact at work, shaping anew the common relations of the States and Confederacy of Germany. A list of proposals for the improvement of the Confederate concerns, especially promoted by Radowitz, have already been mentioned above.

It was undoubtedly of great importance that, on the 22nd of July 1846, Prussia made the proposal to dissolve the provisory determinations over the Press in Frankfort, and brought forward a plan for a new Press legislature. From Würtemberg the proposal to publish the Confederate protocol had been brought forward, but the half heartedness and weakness with which all such matters were negotiated, allowed every decision to be delayed.

I am following the declarations of Radowitz himself, who asserts in his document that King Frederick William IV had made it his first and highest duty, 'to bring Austria to the final knowledge that it is high time to make an end of the deathlike sleep of the Confederacy, and to awaken it to new life'; but that he had the intention, when this goal was attained, to retire from the leadership and to 'leave the direction of further steps to Austria.

There can hardly ever have been a more annihilating judgment passed on any political action, than that which Radowitz here utters in a few words about Prussia's whole attitude with regard to the German question. However, I am sorry to say that I must admit the fitness of this judg-

ment. Only the most extreme political optimism could have suggested to Frederick William IV the idea that Austria would undertake 'the leadership' of the Confederate reforms.

General Radowitz's merit in the development of Germany is, moreover, undisputed and, as it were, prophetic. I afterwards learned to know this clever and rare man better and better; he seemed to have been intended by fate to shape the thoughts of Germany's present form, at a time when the personal relations showed no possibility whatever of its being fulfilled.

Radowitz was like a figure out of the Middle Ages, a soldier who talked politics, as in the days of Fründsberg and Schärtlin, and at the same time equipped like a bishop, of great knowledge and wide reading. He came of a Hungarian family, but was born at Blankenburg in the Harz. He had received his education at a Lyceum in Altenburg, if I am not mistaken, and had belonged to the Westphalian-French army, where he had acquired most thorough military knowledge. During the battle of Leipzig he commanded a French battery. Then he became a Prussian general staff officer, and as military plenipotentiary at the Frankfort Alliance, he turned the deliberations to German politics and reform.

He possessed a phenomenal memory which far exceeded that of most other men. He could read a book of ordinary size in an afternoon, and would afterwards be able to repeat almost every sentence by heart, even giving the number of the page on which it could be found. He could find a place again in an instant. By means of this peculiarity, he had gained his extensive knowledge one might almost say in play, as is but poorly shown by his books.

The best proof of the readiness of memory of this remarkable collective mind is to be found in his iconography of the saints and his mottoes and devices, nearly all of which he had arranged from his memory.

He quoted books in such a manner that people said it could not be correct; but I have often taken him at his word, and made the experiment of writing down the quotation and looking it up. I nearly always found it to be correct.

The only disagreeable arising from this mass of learning, was that he had grown accustomed to adopt a lecturing tone, which could be stopped by no one, besides his sovereign and King, with whom besides, he had many traits of character in common.

The result was that he took possession of every matter, and proceeded to prevent all discussions concerning all. He had a species of poetical conception of most things, and this inclined him to take view of religious questions of which one might be doubtful whether it allowed him freedom in every way, or whether he was not bound in many questions of volition by the set impulses or rules of his catholic circle. But this in no way hampered his personal judgment. Clear-sighted and farseeing in all things which related to politics, he was an excellent teacher for every painstaking politican. But he was not a man of negotiations. He might be rather dangerous than useful to any prince or statesman, who did not himself possess strength of will and initiative power; he belonged to the class of invaluable counsellors, always ready and intelligent; he was a critic, but he certainly did not belong to those who acted according to rules of measure.

His position and importance in politics, and especially as regarded the development of Prussian affairs, was therefore greater in 1848 than afterwards, when it was not a question of counsels and possibilities, but of strong will and ability. No one had known how to explain the wants of the Confederacy to King Frederick William so plainly and well as he; as long as it was only a question of doing so theoretically and academically. But if he thought afterwards that what the King had done, or had wanted to do, for Germany when he mounted the throne would be appraised as having been caused principally through his influence, it certainly displayed the weakness of a nature not intended for negotiations.

On the 20th of November 1847 he handed the King a memorial of the measures to be adopted by the German Confederacy. It was a bill of indictment against the Confederacy since it had first been founded. It proved clearly and decisively the unmistakeable necessity for a legislature for

the Press with relaxation of censorship, the publishing of the proposals of the German Diet, the institutions for the defence of Germany, for the protection of rights, and for material interests.

The memorandum expressed in plain words to the King everything which he ought to do, but the path which he was to adopt in order to succeed in the fulfilment of his intentions was by no means to be pointed out so surely.

Finally, and this should be particularly noticed, Radowitz had even at that time a presentiment 'that one should also consider the results in case the influence of Vienna and the selfish notions of men singly should render it impossible to accomplish anything useful with the German Diet.'

When, however, he went on to say in the memorandum that Prussia must then adopt other measures, one is curious to know what Radowitz advised his King to do in this case, but is, to tell the truth, very much disappointed to learn nothing better than that he must 'unite with the better spirit of the nation.'

Meanwhile, however, much had taken place in an official way to prepare for the adoption of a new form for the German Confederacy. Bunsen had already been asked by his Foreign Minister, Baron Kanitz, during the course of the summer of 1847, to consider whether it would not be possible to come to a more practical understanding with England concerning the leading articles of the present time. This was an inducement for him also to discuss the German question in a manner which was intended to lead the King to the opinion that 'the scale of Prussia's political influence in England was greater than her power in Germany, that is, her ability to lead German progress.'

Bunsen tried in every way to make it clear to the Prussian Government that the ground of understanding of a new form for Germany had been levelled in England. One may leave undecided the question whether Bunsen really derived this optimist view from the interest which the English nation and the English Government was supposed to have taken in the German question, or whether this was only a

way of boasting of his influence, in order to propel his King forward in the direction aimed at by himself.

If anyone in England really cherished this warm feeling for Germany and her desired elevation, it was my brother, and, influenced by him, the Queen. Whether, on the other hand, Bunsen's remarks in his memorial of the 25th of September 1847 were in any degree significant and expressive of Palmerston's views, and those of the existing Government is really to be doubted.

Only in my brother's immediate circle had ideas respecting the duties and calling of the King of Prussia been expressed for and against Germany, and here these questions were a continual subject of discussion and sometimes of strange hopes.

The first incitements for the consideration of the German question dated with my brother from his stay with the Queen in Coburg and Gotha in August and September 1845. At that time the plan was originated of attempting to attain an immediate influence over King Frederick William.

My brother found a numerous princely circle in Coburg. The Grand-Duke of Baden was present with the Hereditary Prince, my brother-in-law; all the Saxon Dukes had come there on a visit, and German affairs were thoroughly discussed. In the following summer I again spent some time in England, and my observations concerning Berlin in May 1847, which I have already mentioned above, had been made thoroughly known to my brother, and induced him to persuade the Queen as earnestly as possible.

In this way Albert had since the year 1846 engaged in a correspondence with the King of Prussia, of the contents and aim of which, besides King Leopold, myself, and our cousin Karl of Leiningen, Stockmar, and Bunsen were also informed.

It will naturally be understood that the degree of hope with which this experiment was regarded, varied with different people. Ensuing events had unfortunately proved me to be only too right, when, in 1846, I expressed my conviction that King Frederick William would never become a German Emperor.

As is seen from the Queen's book even, although it is modestly mentioned, and then only because necessary, Prince Albert also often could not forbear thinking that 'no great advance could be made with the subjective Brandenburg, Hohenzohlern, Frederick William views.'

Already in the year 1846, on the occasion of the Polish affair, and in consequence of the Cracow spoliation, Albert urged the King at length to abandon the pursuit of the sacred alliance, and to make room for modern State ideas.

Little by little he went more particularly into the German constitutional question, and at length he sent the King the deeply energetic memorandum of *adverikie* of the 11th of September 1847, which, according to the times, had somewhat the start of the above mentioned memorial of General von Radowitz, and therefore stands alone in importance. It was very fortunate that our cousin Prince Leiningen, furnished as he was with the necessary personal energy, was the elegant interpreter of the views declared in the memorandum. Stockmar, on the other hand, behaved very wrongly, holding Prince Albert back in every way, and, as was his habit, getting out of the way when matters grew serious.

In opposition to Stockmar, the rest of us were convinced that no one could be more fitted than my brother to speak perfectly clearly and openly with the King of Prussia, on account of his independent and firmly established position with regard to the latter. People might have been of very different opinions concerning the success of this step, but to have declared with equal severity his opinion of the epoch-forming principles of the German politics of the future remains Prince Albert's indisputable merit in the history of our times.

It was precisely my brother's talent and peculiarly diligent way of bringing to a decided shape, and working into a kind of system, thoughts which had been universally recognised and stated.

Thus, at the beginning of the memorial of the 11th of September, stand two bluntly expressed theses which had been stated with much circumlocution by public men and

statesmen, but which my brother alone might without any reserve whatever utter to the King of Prussia:

1. Improvement of popular forms of Government.
2. Restoration of a united Germany.

The proposals contained in the memorial with reference to the accomplishments of these aims were very moderate and thoroughly practical. It is true that no exact understanding could be arrived at concerning Austria's relation to the Constitution of the Confederacy, at the head of which Prussia would have to stand, as a radical separation of the Austrian confederate territories still appeared dangerous and impracticable; but the fundamental idea of the memorandum, that there were affairs concerning the Confederacy which demanded a stricter uniformity of institutions, was at bottom the same at which all politicians were working during the following years, and which really became proportionate to the development of Germany

When Stockmar persuaded Prince Albert that Germany's condition of affairs, especially in the year 1847, had been of an anti-dynastic character, his declarations were in this case always significant for the present state of things, but they were negative and discomposing. He succeeded far less in advising something positive than my brother, who, in his intercourse with Prince Karl and myself, had come much nearer the truth and the necessity in this case than anyone else.

As regards the answer of Frederick William IV, it may already be seen from Prince Albert's letter of the 12th of December 1847, as introduced above, that the King acted as if he agreed to everything except two points; but deliberating and acting are two very distinct things. Most of all, the relations with Austria still offered to Frederick William IV unconquerable difficulties. He thought that he must go so far as to carry out the reform of the German Confederacy as a commission, so to speak, and as if he were the Austrian Emperor's attorney. Yes, he even went so far as to say, 'I am only here to hold the Emperor of Austria's stirrup.' But anyone who knew Austrian affairs was forced to reflect that

in that state not only the will, but the possibility as well was wanting for any readiness and compliance with regard to the reform of the German Confederacy.

I had a closer knowledge of these things than the so-called best informed diplomates and reporters. For I was probably better informed concerning the extensive kingdom of Hapsburg-Lothringia, through my considerable possessions in the heart of Austria and the branch of our family residing in Vienna and Hungary, than anyone else in Germany.

In the summer of 1847, I had moreover thoroughly gone over the Austrian and Hungarian lands with the Duchess. In July, we not only stayed some time in Austria and Vienna, but in August we came into contact in Pressburg and Pesth with many Hungarian gentlemen, and recognised the entire impossibility of any determination being come to here.

I undertook a special journey through Hungary, Siebenbürgen and Buckowina, partly in order to examine the studs and husbandry, partly to stay sometime with several noblemen there. Amongst others, I made a visit of some duration to an estate belonging to Prince Paul Esterhazy. A crowd of the most influential Hungarians of all colours of opinion had assembled here, and from their conversations it became clear to me that, in this remarkable country also, everything would be ripe for revolution in the shortest possible time; the Archduke Stephen, who had just placed himself at the head of the Government, could not succeed in uniting the chief oppositions.

A kingdom which, so to speak, was bereft of all monarchic government, which was in the bitterest financial need, and pressed and threatened on every side, could be prevented from falling only by the maintenance of existing relations. When one reflected that, in addition to this, the only statesman whom it possessed was Prince Metternich, who in his youth had looked upon this principle of preservation as his highest maxim, and now in his advancing years regarded all innovations as the beginning of the end of the combined States' systems of Europe, it was a highly doubtful expectation that Prussia could be called upon by the Austrian side to

undertake the transformation of Germany. Above all, the large kingdom afforded no prospect internally of consolidating itself according to the constitution. The illusive idea concerning the Austrian Empire, which made the foreign politician imagine that he had to do with a united State, disappeared before the traveller, when he stepped over the Hungarian boundary-line; a boundary line which was marked by strict toll duties, and presented itself far more plainly to our eyes than the limits which the German had known in his land in the times before the tolls-union. Added to this was the openly expressed endeavour to separate themselves more and more from the so-called monarchy, and the fact that the first nobility of the land stood at the head of a movement which made the founding of a special Hungarian state appear a question of time only.

That, under these circumstances, the expectations of the Prussian King and his statesmen concerning the agreement of the Austrian Government with regard to the national reform could not be fulfilled, could not but be clear to me, as will be admitted, when I returned in September with the Duchess to Coburg, going by way of Prague, Karlsbad and Eger.

Characteristic of the conception which Metternich had of the Prussian constitutional experiment, were his conversations and correspondences with King Leopold, through which I was always seasonably informed of the entirely unchanged attitude of the Austrian Cabinet. Even my uncle allowed himself to be towed by the Austrian States Chancellor's cable in this question, and it is characteristic by what a continual state of revolutionary fever such prominent persons as Metternich and King Leopold were attacked.

Thus the latter wrote to Prince Metternich amongst others on the 9th of May 1847:

'Since O'Sullivan's departure for Vienna, we have had no dearth of important events. One of them has interested me intensely, I speak of the opening of the Assembly in Berlin. On this occasion I recalled what your Serene Highness said to me concerning it in the Castle at Coblenz, 1845.

'It is a dangerous game which is being played there, and the pleasure of making speeches seemed to be dearly bought. Practical wisdom demands here that everything must go slowly, and that the next reunion of the Assembly should not be appointed for too early a date. The interruption delays the climax, which is otherwise unavoidable in tolerably well-made-up assemblies.

'The Spanish question has grown quieter, but it is unfortunately a chronic evil; if the Queen bears no children it will certainly give rise to great jealousy.

'Your Serene Highness will be sorry to hear of a part change in the French Ministry; it cannot work favourably, and yet a Conservative Ministry is particularly important for France. The danger would be great if revolutions were recommended from that quarter as the normal condition of nations.

'Count W . . ., with whom I am very well satisfied, and who is very much liked here, will be able to give your Serene Highness information concerning all this.

'The Catholics, through their original hatred of the Government, have burdened us here with the mad constitution of which the perpetual elections is the most dissolving elements; as I had told them from the beginning, it is they who are the greatest sufferers by it.

'They are already driven from the cities, and I fear that the approaching elections will again weaken them. Since Belgium existed, and even since 1815, there has been no more able Ministry here than the present one; nevertheless everything is done to make its existence difficult. One is inclined, on contemplating the remarkable events which are now going on in Europe, to think of a large madhouse.

'May the approaching beautiful time of the year work favourably on your Serene Highness; illness is driving me in a few days to Wiesbaden.

'But I will not be too prolix, and close with the assurance of my most heartfelt respect.

'LEOPOLD R.'

Nothing is more significant of the unshaken hopes which

Conservative Europe set on Austria, than the fact that my uncle was not to be weaned from the unfortunate idea that we should have in the decaying Imperial state on the Danube a suitable reserve against the Revolutions, which were admitted to be threatening us everywhere.

Yet already at that time, the Austrian policy had three defeats to note down, from which the Metternich system would never recover. Cracow had been annexed in order to choke the Polish movement, and the Western Powers' most bitterly blamed violation of the contract, so carefully adhered to by the Austrian Government, had no other consequences than to force a state, which already stood on the brink of financial destruction, to make enormous war preparations, which were nevertheless not fitted to bring the Polish movement to a standstill.

Metternich had, at the same time, at the election of Pope Pius IX, experienced a shameful repulse in the circles of his good friends, and in Upper Italy the possession of the monarchy began to waver seriously. And to these internal difficulties was joined that of the *Sonderbundskrieg* in Switzerland, where the old Metternich policy had, as it were, been lamentably shipwrecked before the eyes of all Europe. Thus old Austria found herself in a situation through which, if Prussia had only had an energetic will, Germany's independence might have been secured. Meanwhile, it would have been idle to start the question what should be done, if Frederick William IV had really been worthy of the hopes which were set on him. In the actual course of things, the birth of a new epoch of European political relations was, however, to come from France, and be introduced by a revolution in Paris.

What the causes were which from the year 1846 led to the overthrow of Louis Philippe, it will not be difficult for me to show, by relating a few personal experiences in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

THE SPANISH MARRIAGES.—THE DUKE AND DUCHESS START ON A TOUR THROUGH SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.—TOULON.—QUEEN CHRISTINA AND HER FORTUNES.—AT BARCELONA.—LESSEPS.—EN ROUTE FOR MALAGA.—THE SHIP CAUGHT IN A STORM.—SEVILLE: THE BULL-FIGHT.—VISITS TANGIERS.—RECEIVED BY THE PACHA.—IN THE SERAIL.—FLIGHT OF ITS DENIZENS.—THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS.—ARRIVAL OF THE 'PHŒNIX' WITH THE DUCHESS AND SUITE.—IMPOSSIBLE TO LAND.—GIBRALTAR.—PROJECTED MARRIAGE OF QUEEN ISABELLA.—CONFUSION OF DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE AND ENGLAND.—STOCKMAR WRONG AS TO PRINCE ALBERT'S POSITION.—PRINCE LEOPOLD AS A CANDIDATE.—QUEEN CHRISTINA'S LETTER TO THE DUKE.—ITS SECRET MEANING.—THE DUKE'S LETTER TO KING LEOPOLD.—TO QUEEN CHRISTINA.—WISHES TO RETURN BY WAY OF ENGLAND.—OPPOSED BY PRINCE ALBERT.—HIS LETTER *re* ANSWER TO QUEEN CHRISTINA.—DON FRANCESCO AND THE DUC DE MONTPENSIER MARRIED TO THE TWO PRINCESSES.—QUEEN VICTORIA'S VIEWS ON THE SPANISH MARRIAGES.—IN PORTUGAL.—INTREPIDITY OF DONNA MARIA.—AT OSBORNE.—THE RETURN HOME.—DIETZ.—DON MIGUEL.—TROUBLES IN PORTUGAL.—ENGLAND AND SPAIN TO THE RESCUE.—LOUIS PHILIPPE AND METTERNICH PROTECT THE SWISS JESUITS.—THE FRENCH KING'S PERSONAL CHARACTER.—DEATH OF THE DUC D'ORLEANS.

THE history of the so-called Spanish marriage became decisive for Louis Philippe's position in France, and his relations with England during the last years of his reign. Few people can have any idea, in these days, what a wide importance the question as to whom the two daughters of the widowed Queen Maria Christina should marry exercised in European politics.

Since Thiers' overthrow all the efforts of the French Ministry were directed towards the support of the laboriously gained intimacy between the two neighbouring kingdoms, but the circumstances of the Pyrenean peninsula were a continual subject of jealousy and irritation in the relations of the Cabinets of St James' and Versailles. In England France's

demeanour in the Spanish marriage affair was regarded as the real touch-stone of Louis Philippe's loyalty and that of his House, and in France they would not renounce the influence gained over Spanish affairs. It is therefore comprehensible that, during the latter years of his life, Guizot felt the need of particularly justifying in his Memoirs the attitude which he had observed with regard to these events. Everyone was convinced that the breaking-up of the Anglo-French alliance was of such consequence to all Europe, that each party strove to throw the blame on the other.

Just at that time, when the politicians of all the Powers were watching with anxious expectation the occurrences in Spain, I was about to undertake a journey with my wife through this country, which in those days was still considered as lying entirely out of the way, and was but rarely visited by tourists.

One prepared for a jaunt through the beautiful peninsula as one undertakes an expedition to the interior of Africa nowadays, and the attempt to travel with women through the unsafe provinces of the ancient kingdom was looked upon as an adventurous and difficult enterprise. I had the intention of taking a trip to Africa from Spain, and going thence to Portugal, where I wished to introduce my young consort to the dear relations at the Royal Court. Such an undertaking was almost impossible without the support of the French and English Governments, and as we had this amply my appearance in Spain was looked upon as an event of political importance. It was nothing more than a strange accident which involved me in the great question of the day, and which appeared to have selected me to play a certain part in the history and development of the celebrated Spanish marriage.

Without the slightest intention to connect myself with the politics of the Peninsula, I left Germany on the 23rd of March 1846, accompanied by my wife and my cousins, Alexander and Arthur Mensdorff, with two gentlemen and a lady. We went to Marseilles by way of Strasburg, Besançon, Lyons and Avignon. We had manifold skirmishes with impudent postmasters and untrustworthy postillions, and only the voyage down the Rhône, which we made in the steamboat *Syrius* restored our good spirits and power to enjoy nature in the South

Although I was travelling under an assumed name, official ceremonial receptions could not be entirely avoided. Louis Philippe's government was not to be prevented from making my undertaking a public affair, ostensibly on account of the diplomatic disputes which were then going on. We tried in every way to escape from the tiresome official receptions, but it was in vain, and gave rise to many a laughable incident.

After a short examination of the sights of Toulon, the fortifications, arsenals and prisons, we left for Marseilles and took passage for Barcelona on the 2nd of April, on board the *Amsterdam*, a French ship, which I had chartered. Here, where I had six years before witnessed the overthrow of Queen Christina and the rise of Espartero, we landed on the Spanish peninsula.

What had not happened since those days in the pattern land of military revolution! The Queen, who had then had to give way to the fortunate General, was back again, and had once more seized the reins of government. Whilst Espartero was going to encounter General Prim in the battle-field, on the 21st of June 1843, with 8000 men, General Prim being engaged in uniting the Dictator's opposers in Catalonia with the Queen's money, Narvaez landed in Valencia and hoisted the flag of the Moderados. He brought an army of 30,000 men, before which Espartero's faction dispersed, and the Dictator was forced to flee to the South. On the 30th July he left Spain on an English ship sailing from Cadiz, without having had justice done him as to his endeavours to bring about the peace and security of Spain.

But the Progressionists had engaged in too deep a conflict with the Church of Spain to endure their rule any longer in the fourth decade. When Queen Isabella was declared a major on the 10th of November 1843 in the Cortes, Narvaez, it is true, made a short truce with the Progressionists, by taking Olozoga into the Cabinet; but in three weeks the latter was again dismissed, and a moderate Camarilla assembled round the French Ambassador General Bresson, who had trouble in restraining his party from perpetrating the most extreme follies against the Progressive party. This was the moment at which Maria Christina thought she might

emerge from her exile in Paris, and appeared in Spain to demand the full rights of a Queen Mother.

On the 4th of February 1844 she entered Barcelona, on the 23rd Madrid. Shortly before that occurred the death of her sister-in-law Louisa Charlotta, the wife of Franz de Paulas, who had zealously tried to bring about the marriage of one of her sons with Queen Isabella, in order to obtain in this way a greater degree of influence over the Government.

But Maria Christina was now once more mistress of the situation, and the whole world thought that this Government would establish the preponderance of the French Cabinet in Spain

That the Queen nevertheless went her own way in many things was shown in the affair of her daughter's marriage, which had begun in those years to be the turning point of European politics.

Meanwhile the good understanding between Maria Christina and Narvaez did not last long. The all-powerful General's position had been shaken by the Minister of Finances, Salamanca. When a portion of the Moderados began to dispute Narvaez's excessive reactionary measures in the Cortes, Miraflores undertook in the year 1846 to form a new, and, it must be admitted, very transitory Ministry. The recall of the still apparently indispensable General in March, ended on the 4th of April with his sudden downfall, through which he was forced to leave Spain.

On the same day I received at Barcelona, through the French Consul-General Lesseps, with whom I have always remained on friendly terms since then, and whose name became celebrated by the Suez Canal, the first news of the great events in Madrid.

The Duchess recorded with astonishment in her diary the impression produced by the contrast between the splendours of the scenery and the hopeless political condition of the country. Nothing could be a greater proof of the transmutability of things than the fact that in 1840, almost on the same day I had left Spain, after seeing this Queen Maria Christina forced to humble herself to a Progressionist officer, and that I returned to find her treading in the dust a loyal

and moderate General, who was thoroughly devoted to the monarchy.

Concerning this strange coincidence of events my brother sent me a long letter at Gibraltar on the 20th of April.

'You seem to exercise an unfavourable kind of magnetic influence on the fate of Spain, for every time you show yourself there, the Regent is driven away, and risings, murder and death occur in every portion of the land. You will at length come to be looked upon as a kind of banshee whose apparition forebodes evil for the House.'

In reality, however, the turn of events in Spain was received much more earnestly in England than appears from these words, for people still saw in Maria Christina only a tool of Louis Philippe, led by General Bresson, the French envoy; they even grew more and more bitter in rivalry and jealousy of France.

Meanwhile, we travellers in Spain had found but little time in which to occupy ourselves with high politics. We avoided the capital; the goals of our journey were Malaga and Granada, the Mecca of our pilgrimage hither the Alhambra. Since those days this tour has been described often enough, but then it has grown much more convenient. Whereas the Duchess was taking down with delight several daguerreotypes of splendid buildings, with which one had formerly to content one's self, the most excellent copies of Spain's former greatness are now in everybody's hands.

On the way from Valencia to Malaga we were overtaken by the heaviest storm which I ever experienced on the sea. Already at our departure on the 7th we had a bad wind, and during the following night threatening clouds gathered on the horizon. The moon, described by poets as the peaceful, still moon, had, to our astonishment and to the small satisfaction of the crew, gathered around her a tricoloured halo. During the night the weather was so stormy as to drive me from my place on deck into the saloon which I had long hated, and where I battled for hours amidst frightful heat with seasickness. At length, certain of defeat, I rushed up on deck and, followed by the waves as if by furies, staggered to a cooler retreat which the captain's care had arranged for me. The sea had meanwhile grown furious, and the waves swept

high over the deck. The ship flew from side to side, and often lay so that the water rushed into the funnel and threatened to extinguish the fire in the engine-room. The storm grew worse every hour, the sea howled frightfully, and the morning went by in the fruitless struggle of our ship against the contrary wind; in the afternoon the captain appeared with the request to be allowed to put the ship about in order to seek shelter in a bay on the coast. I gladly gave my consent, and slowly as we had previously progressed, only making a mile in five hours, so quickly did we fly to the shore, driven by the gale. We anchored towards evening in the small bay of La Roquetas, where more than twenty large and small crafts had taken refuge.

We reached Malaga only on the morning of the 10th of April. The journey to Granada was continued hence over the mountains from Colmenar on horseback and in carriages. The beautiful days which we devoted to seeing the wonderful remains of Arabian culture, made up to us for the heavy fatigues which it was then necessary to undergo in order to obtain the enjoyment of those beautiful sights.

We drove to Seville by way of Cordova and Bailen. A great bull-fight was held in our honour, the excitements of which were endured by the ladies only through the summoning of all their courage. We continued our journey to Cadiz on the *Guadalquivir*, whence we could make an interesting trip to Africa, as Queen Victoria had placed at our disposal the man-of-war *Phœnix*, Captain Dennis.

We anchored before Tangiers, and after spending several days there, our company separated, as I wished to undertake a trip by land to Tetuan, whereas the Duchess was to remain on the *Phœnix* and go thither by sea.

Tangiers was the capital of one of the most important provinces of the Moroccan Empire, and stood under the charge of the Pacha Russelham ben Ali Astod. As no German sovereign had probably ever entered the Moroccan territory, the Pacha had resolved, after thoroughly communicating with the English Consul, to show us extraordinary honour.

As, however, Mahommedan customs were still strictly adhered to in Morocco, and these customs forbade a Mussulman to enter a house occupied by a Christian, the governor

of the Sultan paid his visit in the open square facing the haven.

A portion of the Pacha's body-guard appeared, bringing a charger and most richly ornamented saddle, which I had to mount, whilst the Pacha himself rode up with a large train of followers, to greet me solemnly. He was a very stately man of about sixty, of upright carriage and energetic features. After a few compliments, which we paid each other through the medium of the English Consul, we set ourselves in motion in order to pay the Pacha a visit at his Alcazor, which was by a special favour to be shown to us entirely.

The castle stands on a considerable height at the upper end of the city. We alighted at the gates, the Pacha offered me his hand and led me alone into the inner hall of the serail. The order that all the women and slaves were to be gone at the proper time had probably not been punctually carried out, for when I entered the Pacha's apartments all kinds of charming figures started up like frightened deer; the way was only gradually cleared, so that the Pacha could lead me further with more composed countenance.

In one of the halls a Moorish luncheon consisting of tea and a peculiarly prepared dish of maize was served. After I had taken my departure, I rode to the heights which overlook the city, and which afford a most charming view.

On the following morning, which was the 1st of May, we began our wanderings over the smaller Atlas Mountains towards Tetuan. We rode with an escort given us by the Pacha, with vanguard and rearguard, going inland by heavy paths, towards the most mountainous part of the country, and only halted at noon on the peak of a woody mountain.

From this point our way led over steep, thickly-grown slopes, and grew more and more romantic. When we had climbed the heights it descended over masses of rock into deep defiles, whence the stony way opened through narrow passes into a luxuriantly grown valley, shut in on every side by the wooded mountains and reminding one of many parts of the Welsh Alps.

Tetuan emerged from an almost precipitous ridge in the full light of the afternoon sun, and when we were within a short hour's distance of the city, a troop of horsemen appeared

at whose head, an old, grey-haired soldier and the younger Mr Butler, the son of the English Consul, came to meet us. When we entered the old Moorish city the entire population seemed to be on their feet, so that we could hardly press through the crowd.

Quartered in old Mr Butler's house, I enjoyed at sunset, from the roof of the Consul's comfortable villa, built in the Moorish style, the charming view of the dazzlingly white city with its many cupolas and turrets, built regularly in a longish square. In the background rose the mountains, which we had descended that afternoon. Towards the north stretched a wide plain, covered with gardens and fertile fields, bounded by pine woods, and in the distant horizon one could catch a glimpse of a shining blue band of water, which betrayed the vicinity of the Mediterranean sea.

The *Phœnix* was to anchor there the same evening, bringing, as has already been said, the ladies of the party. But a frightful storm had driven the voyagers as far as the heights of Algiers, and only after a twelve hours' battle with the waves had the *Phœnix* succeeded in approaching the shores of Tetuan. When, on the morning of the 2nd of May, I rode down to the seashore, it was no small surprise to behold the *Phœnix* in a situation which rendered landing impossible.

Whilst I stood on the coast watching the fearful rolling of the ship on the angry sea, the Duchess had in vain entreated the Captain to let her land in a boat. The despair of the poor ladies was boundless, yet the *Phœnix* had for that day to be left to her fate.

I rode back alone and disappointed to the city, where I repaired to Pacha Hadschi Abdullah Aschach, who was awaiting me at the gate of his Alcazar. He had had everything prepared not only for my arrival, but for that of my wife as well, but fate had willed it otherwise, and he was forced to content himself with giving expression to his gallantry through the sending of a rose which he handed me with an Arabic poem, and numerous other presents.

I had some trouble getting on board the *Phœnix* with my attendants next day, on account of the continually agitated sea, for when we appeared on shore the state of things was but little changed, and Captain Dennis even now refused to land his

passengers. When, towards mid-day, he himself was at length rowed to shore in his gig, we had already made up our minds to turn our face towards Gibraltar, and trusted ourselves to the rocking boat, which took over half-an-hour to bear us to the *Phœnix*. We weighed anchor and shaped our course for Ceuta, where we had a magnificent view of the African coast and of Hercules' Pillars, then the torrid zone disappeared behind us and we were confronted by the rocks of Gibraltar rising majestically from the sea. Here we were for several days overwhelmed with kindness from the English commander and the officers of the army and marine, and parted unwillingly from this memorable bulwark of English power, as the time had been marked out for us at which we were expected in Portugal.

It was precisely during the days of my interesting stay in Morocco that I was much more deeply involved in matters of high politics by the ruler of the Spanish monarchy, Queen Maria Christina, than I had ever expected or had reason to desire.

For over four years the Cabinets of the Western Powers had occupied themselves with the question who the lucky chosen one was to be, who was destined to help young Queen Isabella to rule beautiful Spain.

'Queen Isabella,' as Guizot remarked in his Memoirs, 'was only twelve years old, but her marriage had become the object of the reflections of all even tolerably foresighted politicians in Spain, France, and all Europe. On this occasion the leading French statesman forgot even to mention that it was he himself who had started the matter unnecessarily early. In his apology he laid much weight on the fact that Queen Christina and the moderate party in Spain particularly wished to have the Duc d'Aumale as King Consort of Spain, and could not boast enough of Louis Philippe's extraordinary moderation and loyalty, through which this project, so advantageous for France, had been cut short from the first.

One of the consequences of this would have been the assembling of the most different candidates, the choice of whom could not be indifferent to France. One can admit, yet without recognising the fact, that much too great weight was laid upon Queen Maria Christina's leaning towards an Orleans marriage for her daughter. She was always ready to flatter

Louis Philippe when she needed his help; on the other hand, when she felt herself free, she did not hesitate to take steps which could by no means be reconciled with her entire devotion and submission to her uncle in Paris. During my stay there in 1843 I had the opportunity of often seeing and speaking intimately with Maria Christina in the Royal House.

Whilst she was living here in banishment, she could find no more pleasant assurance for the King than that she and the Moderados would try to bring about an Orleans marriage for Queen Isabella. This was naturally on condition that she should regain the rule in Spain, towards which end she was endeavouring to obtain Louis Philippe's support.

But when Maria Christina reached the wished-for goal in 1844, she in no way fulfilled the hopes of the Orleans with regard to the Spanish throne, but was in reality endeavouring to gain her daughter's hand for her brother, the Duke of Trapani. The confusion of diplomatic negotiations, which had grown endless since the year 1844, brought more disappointments than explanations, for it is incredible how much dust was raised by the less diplomatic Bulwer and Bresson in order to make their own importance in the affair appear in the most dazzling light possible.

This diplomatic opposition, which received the strongest impression in Guizot's Memoirs, through the communication of every trifling episode and every small dissension, led the most modern historian of these events to form the opinion that the Spanish marriage had from the first been taken up with a view to the interests of the Houses of Coburg and Orleans. But if Hillebrandt also was right in saying in his History of France, that the 'hearty understanding' between England and France had been shipwrecked in Spain on the same rock on which, ten years before, it had been piloted by Thiers and Palmerston, yet, from the first, there had not been the slightest trace of rivalry between the Courts on the subject of the Spanish marriage.

It must not be forgotten that the Coburg relationship had just formed a link which also bound the English and French Courts, and that nothing was less thought of than the possibility that a separation between the related Houses could be caused by a new family alliance.

If Palmerston cherished the opinion that the candidature of a Coburg as the Spanish Queen's Consort was much more of a French than an English interest, this really corresponded to the state of affairs, and one must not think that Palmerston wished by this remark to say something favourable for the Coburg prospects in Spain; he only wished to offer every possible opposition to Aberdeen's attitude.

His candidate was Don Enrique, the second son of Franz de Paulas, who also appeared the most dangerous to Queen Christina, because he had the greatest connexion with the Progressionists, who were her worst and most unreconcilable enemies.

If, on the other hand, his elder brother, the Duke of Cadiz, appeared just as repulsive to the Queen Mother from a moral point of view, as he did from a political one, yet one must hardly blame her for it. The fact alone that there was ever any talk in diplomatic circles of the marriage of this totally unfit man, is without question the most obscure part of the whole matter, which did no honour to any of these concerned in it.

It is no secret that the man, who was afterwards forced upon Queen Isabella as her husband, was no man, rather it was everywhere spoken about and jested over, yet the diplomacy of those days did not hesitate to deliberate over the eventuality of such a marriage for Queen Isabella. This union was all the more insisted upon on some sides, so that the Queen, as they foolishly flattered themselves, should remain childless.

Matters stood thus at the time when the visits of the two Courts of France and England in the year 1843-45 seemed all the more to be assuring the friendship known throughout Europe. In 1843, Queen Victoria appeared at Eu with my brother, Louis Philippe thereupon came to Windsor with Guizot, and in the following year the second visit of the English sovereigns took place at Eu.

During the latter, certain agreements were made concerning the Spanish marriage affair. Many particulars of the meeting of the monarchs have become generally known from the Queen's book of my brother's life.

The real matter of the mutual promises has, until now,

never been told otherwise than conjecturally. What has been said about them has been more or less correctly guessed, but they will have been first authenticated only by a letter which my brother wrote to me, and which I will communicate further on.

I will only mark here, that in Stockmar's Memorabilities my brother's position with regard to the matter seems not to be quite rightly defined, and the points which were looked upon at Eu as settled by no means coincided. The entire representation of the latter question in this often quoted work is also not of much more worth than that of a historical combination.

The English sovereigns doubtless had, during the pleasant days at Eu, bound themselves rather too firmly by their promise to take all pains to bring about a Bourbon marriage. Lord Aberdeen, who was trying at this price to make himself agreeable to King Louis Philippe, entirely neglected to find a suitable formula for the reciprocal obligations, so that each party could afterwards refer to the arrangements of Eu, and all the later well known recriminations were on account of these highly unfortunate punktations.

Queen Victoria and my brother had, through their promise to support the Bourbon candidature, deprived themselves of all freedom of action, whereas Guizot had, according to the extensive ideas of the House of Bourbon, to turn and twist everything, until no one was left for Queen Isabella except the Duke of Cadiz, which meant as much as not getting married at all.

In that case Guizot thought he might secure the throne of Spain to the House of Orleans, through the marriage of the Duc de Montpensier with Christina's second daughter.

When my uncle Ferdinand undertook a journey to Portugal in the year 1846, with his youngest son, the French Government at once ascribed to it a motive which seemed to be opposed to the agreement of Eu, and the English sovereigns felt this to be all the more unpleasant, as they were hardly in a position to react upon Guizot's undertaking.

It was the weak point in their position, that their hands had been more tightly bound by Aberdeen's unhappy conduct than they were willing to admit to themselves.

When I in turn undertook the Spanish journey already described, they tried in France, as has been said above, to give it as official a character as possible, so that it might be insinuated to the English sovereigns that the House of Coburg had by no means given up its Spanish ambition. To tell the truth, we were all equally far from wishing to bring about an event which might make a rift in the carefully fostered relations of the House of Orleans. Added to this, the principal person in this drama, Prince Leopold himself, in no way took a powerful initiative. His travels through Spain and Portugal had never assumed the form of an attempt to gain the sympathies of the Spaniards or their Court.

He avoided going to Madrid, and his father, who had already given his consent with the greatest reluctance to the marriage of his eldest son in Portugal, and had just found the latter in a no very pleasant position, was still less inclined to grow enthusiastic over the prospects of his youngest son. They had therefore the greatest trouble to prevent the possibilities which presented themselves from being counteracted on the spot through the members of the House themselves.

As for me, personally, I was convinced that the marriage of Prince Leopold would have been a great piece of good luck for Spain. He had developed well during the past few years, and King Leopold, who verily was not wanting in knowledge of mankind, praised him, and said that he gave promise of good things.

It would certainly have been more to Spain's interests to bind the young, lively, and single-minded Queen of the country to such a man, who could be her support and who would have brought her into the way of leading a proper family life. I may therefore say openly, and without prepossession for my family, that I was of the opinion that the marriage should have been brought about.

This may have become known at the Spanish Court, and especially to Queen Christina, without my having wished or been able to make myself in any way officially noticeable. But the difference between my brother's position and mine was, that the Queen knew me personally, and that I came into contact with a great many people, who had either a

direct or an indirect influence over the government in Spain.

That Queen Christina should now turn to me under these difficult circumstances, was a step concerning which diplomacy made the most remarkable conjectures in their despatches. How she came to do it, and what decided her, made Guizot rack his brains for months together. He put the blame of the whole matter on Bulwer, as is seen in his despatch, as he pretended that the latter had inspired the Queen with the extraordinary idea of cutting the knot by a direct demand for Prince Leopold's hand. I am convinced that Bulwer really meant as little to take any step in favour of the House of Coburg as Palmerston afterwards did. When Lord Aberdeen said to St Aulaire: 'Do not accuse Bulwer, he has done and will do nothing to favour this marriage,' he was certainly right, and I do not understand how the latter could add with such certainty: 'With regard to the latter Lord Aberdeen was mistaken.'

The only thing which is certain is, that people in England at length began to believe that Bulwer had acted too arbitrarily in the affair, as that shortly before his fall Lord Aberdeen made a last sacrifice to the connivance against France, by recalling the pretended author of Queen Christina's exciting epistle from his post.

In the much talked about letter, however, which will be made known here for the first time, the plain alternative, towards which the Queen wavered in her choice between Prince Leopold and the Duke of Trapani, does not exactly point to the fact that the English diplomates of Bulwer's school, with their openly declared tendency for Progressionist Don Enrique, had stood behind the chair of the letter-writer She wrote on the 2nd of May 1846:

'To His Royal Highness

'The reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg.

'Your Royal Highness.—The contents of this letter will explain why I address myself to Your Royal Highness, as the friend and the head of the family of Saxe-Coburg.

'Queen Isabella's happiness and the tranquillity of Spain

demand the prompt solution of the question of my daughter's marriage with a properly chosen man.

'Now, the views which have been formed with regard to this appear more difficult of realisation every day, as the Princes of the House of Spain are away on account of the greater or less part which they took in the parties which agitate the country, and the Prince, my brother, does not seem to have gained the liking of the people.

'The King of Belgium is aware that, under these circumstances, I have always thought of Prince Leopold; I still think of him, and should like this alliance, as I consider that it would be the one fitted to reconcile my daughter's happiness with that of the Spanish nation.

'I therefore beg Your Royal Highness, who, through His Royal Highness Prince Albert are sufficiently identified with the Court of England, to inform Her Majesty Queen Victoria, who as Queen and mother will understand the interest which I have in the establishing of my daughter and in the peace and welfare of this kingdom.

'A just appreciation of Spain's position, the family relations which bind me to the Court of France, and the gratitude which I feel for the friendship of His Majesty the King of the French, will always make me desire to see Queen Isabella keep up the most intimate relations with France and King Louis Philippe, and that the politics of Spain may never give so powerful a neighbour just causes of complaint.

'With this end in view, I should feel disposed to unite the two families of France and Spain by the marriage of my second daughter with the Duc de Montpensier.

'With this end in view I have tried until now to favour the marriage of Queen Isabella with Count Trapani, still I must not forget that my daughter is the sovereign of a country which I myself have governed, and which is justly jealous of an independence which no one has either the right to take away, nor any reason to dispute.

'I have always heard that Her Majesty the Queen of England is animated like myself by feelings of sincere friendship towards France, and that His Majesty has been prepared to consent to and even to support a combination which, with-

out being fatal to English interests, was preferred by His Majesty the King of France; but I have always heard also that Her Majesty the Queen of England upheld, as I do, the independence of Spain in this matter, which is first of all a Spanish matter, and I should like to be told as frankly as I have expressed myself in this letter, if, in case my daughter were to choose Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, this choice would be agreeable to his family, and if the Queen of England would then uphold, as I have been assured she has hitherto upheld, the principles of independence of which I have spoken and would then help us to mitigate any unjust resentment, if such should arise, which I can hardly believe.

'In the actual position of this affair, I think that this step will better be taken in the form of a particular question between the two Courts and the two families, than between two Cabinets, as in the latter case, the matter would perhaps be prematurely made public.

'Your Royal Highness will therefore take this strictly private and confidential communication in good part.

'I profit by this occasion to assure Your Royal Highness of the sentiments entertained for you and all your family and the constant desire for your happiness felt by Your Highness's devoted

'MARIA CHRISTINA.'

As may easily be seen, the text of this letter in no way shows a very great understanding of the ways of English politics.

If one wished to find out the secret meaning of Queen Christina's letter, one would perhaps have to assume that she wished to force the English Court, to make a final declaration and decision one way or the other, in order at length to obtain freedom of action for herself.

The inactive reserve which the English Government had found it necessary to assume since the unfortunate meeting of Eu, made it easy to understand that Isabella's mother was at length forced to act for herself, and this all the more, the less she appeared able to come to an understanding with King Louis Philippe during those weeks. For a memorial which appeared at that time in the Madrid newspaper, signed by

the secretary to the Duke of Rianzares, which was in favour of the candidature of the Duke of Trapani, aroused great indignation in Louis Philippe, and he expressed himself plainly on the subject to Queen Christina.

Without prejudice against or prepossession for either the one or the other of those concerned in this matter, I might look upon the letter as the natural expression of a mother's wish to assure the real happiness of a daughter, and the advantage of Spain, after so many fruitless negotiations.

I considered it right to inform my relations of this my free comprehension of the matter, without wishing to take any important part in an affair which was of a nature principally to occupy the Courts and politics of Western Europe. I wrote to this effect, on the 16th of May, 1846, from Lisbon, where I had received the letter, to King Leopold:

'I send you herewith the copy of a letter from the Queen Mother of Spain, which she addressed to me here, and which Ferdinand handed to me. Although I can conjecture that you will already have been informed in an indirect manner of the contents of this remarkable document, yet the manner and method in which it is composed, as well as the matter itself of which it treats, remain a very important event for us all.

'A question concerning our family has been brought up with much adroitness, the settlement of which may be of unbounded consequence. This is neither the place, nor is it my task, to throw a light on the matter itself and to give advice to either the one or the other. I must leave all this to you alone; nevertheless I think it right, as the Queen has addressed herself in so peculiar a manner to me, to remain the mediator in the transactions until she officially relieves me of this duty.

'I think I have acted rightly in announcing to the Queen the receipt of her letter in the most obliging manner, and offering her my thanks as well as my services. The copy of this letter lies near me. I have written to Albert also, to the same effect as to you, and thus performed my commission.

The above mentioned preliminary answer to the Queen's letter ran as follows:

'MADAM,—It was only on my quite recent arrival in

Lisbon that I received the letter with which Your Majesty has seen fit to honour me, and I hasten to express my profound gratitude for this proof of confidence, and fresh evidence of the good-will with which Your Majesty has never ceased to overwhelm me, and which has always given me such happiness.

'It will therefore be a pleasant duty to me to inform Queen Victoria, my sister, of the sentiments which Your Majesty was good enough to communicate to me with all frankness, and I venture to express a most sincere desire that the future may bring the fulfilment of all the wishes which Your Majesty has formed for the happiness of Her Majesty Queen Isabella, your august daughter, as well as for the peace and welfare of Spain.

'If, meanwhile, Your Majesty judges me worthy of your confidence, you will always find me discreet and ready to place myself at your orders.

'I profit by this happy occasion, madam, again to express to Your Majesty my sincerest wishes for the constitution of your happiness, as well as that of your august family, and to renew the expression of the profound respect with which I remain Your Majesty's very humble and very devoted servant,

'ERNEST.

'*Lisbon*, 12*th May* 1846.'

It will be seen in this letter, that any hint concerning the true object of the question, and therefore a positive answer, was most carefully avoided. Indeed I had guessed that the decision of the matter would afterwards be delayed, but I could form no idea, from the awkward position of English politics, how the affair would be received.

In order to give a correct description of the real impression which had been made in England by the careful 'consideration' which was at that moment the predominant feeling with regard to the French Court, I must again mention that at that time, I had the intention of returning by way of England. But many hindrances to this plan had arisen, and my brother, as he remarks in the following letter, had to regret that the Spanish letter would prevent this

journey from taking place. But if anyone thinks that Queen Victoria and my brother were entirely delighted with this affair of pretended Coburg House politics, this would, on the other hand, be no less a mistake. Everyone was afterwards very much pleased, as our return journey was nevertheless made by way of England, and the first feeling of embarrassment, which was expressed in the following letter from my brother, was not a very enduring one.

As the really most important portion of the following letter will meantime, as I have already said, relate what my brother had to tell me about the arrangements made in Eu, and which, to tell the truth, do not represent Lord Aberdeen's policy as being particularly neutral.

'*Buckingham Palace, May 26th* 1846.

'DEAR ERNEST,—Under these circumstances you will understand how sorry we are not to be able to answer your wish to come over here. Another point is now added, the offer which Queen Christina has made. It has thrown us into the greatest embarrassment.

'We had bound ourselves towards France, in case the King kept his word, and did not push forward any of his sons, to use all our influence towards bringing about a Bourbon marriage, which would be desired by the King and by Queen Christina, and popular in Spain also.

'We have also explained at the same time, that we do not admit France's right to lay down any rules whatever, to the Spaniards, for the marriage of Queen Isabella, or to dictate to them, that we would honourably uphold Spain's independence, and her right to order her own affairs, that, therefore, in case a Bourbon marriage would not be acceptable to Spain, in spite of our effort to accomplish it, any other marriage, from the moment it was desired by Spain, would be perfectly right in our eyes.

'This was on the point of being fulfilled, the Bourbons have become impossible, and a declaration of Spain's, that this is the case, would have unloosed the knot.

'Bulwer then made up his mind to take part in a step of Queen Christina's which, on account of King Louis Philippe, she did not venture upon *alone*.

'This gives us the appearance of faithlessness, intrigue, perfidiousness, etc., etc., and affords France just reason to complain.

'We have seen ourselves forced to wash our hands of the matter, and to explain to France that we are no parties to this step. This is naturally not believed, and your entirely inexplicable journey to Spain during Uncle Ferdinand's presence there, is a fact which makes appearances seem very much against us.

'Should the marriage with Leopold succeed, there is only one thing to be done, and that is for France to enter into it heartily, otherwise, even if the matter is carried through, Spain and Portugal will be endangered for the future. For this it is necessary that France should not appear to the world to be overreached by us, and thus wounded in her patriotic feelings; that is, that the marriage must not appear to be an English work, but, as far as possible, a French one. Therefore, to come here now, after what has happened, would for ever destroy Leopold's prospects.

'There is no question that the choice of Leopold is by far the best for Spain, and France would have to understand this. If it could be connected with the marriage of Montpensier with the Infanta, and represented to the world as being brought about by France, it is assured, and we must work to that end. Whether it is to be desired for Leopold himself I dare not decide; the question now is, whether he has the will and the courage for it. In that case, the position, being a high, honourable and powerful one, is also a good one for him, if it should not be the case, the small charms of the Queen, and the many political worries which will beset him, will become an unbearable burden. Ferdinand knows the most concerning this, and has, I think, been made Leopold's confidant on the subject.

'I close with the request that you will give Uncle Ferdinand and Ferdinand (cousin) this letter to read, as my time does not allow me to repeat it.—Always your faithful Brother,

'ALBERT.'

The idea with which my brother showed himself to be

completely filled was, therefore, to win King Louis Philippe over to the Coburg marriage.

King Leopold also approved of this idea, and it was therefore natural that the answer which I owed Queen Christina was very long in coming. When I left Lisbon with my Spanish travelling companions in June, and went to England, no one had the slightest notion what was to be done in the matter. The fact that during this time Louis Philippe and Maria Christina had hopelessly fallen out over the choice of the Bourbon Princes might perhaps have been no unfavourable circumstance, and the Coburg candidature might therefore have more chance of winning. But one could hardly expect that the French Government should lead Prince Leopold into Madrid with ringing of bells. This idea of the English Government reminded one, if one may be allowed to compare a peaceable diplomatic transaction with a great war, of the demand which was laid before King Louis XIV in the Spanish War of Succession, 130 years before, that he should himself drive his grandson out of Spain.

Besides, nothing could be done during my presence in England. After the birth of her third daughter the Queen needed greater care and longer rest, and moreover, the fall of Palmerston's Ministry and the transfer of foreign affairs from Aberdeen to Lord Palmerston were not calculated to substantially aid the Coburg marriage matter.

There was never any talk of a family council, as has been pretended by later authors. It was painful that Maria Christina must remain without an answer, and King Leopold was forced to make up his mind to excuse himself to her for it. He therefore wrote to me from :

'*Buckingham Palace, August 5th,* 1846.

'I am taking advantage of the Courier's departure to write to you. I have already sent your excuses by word of mouth to Queen Christina, and the letter which Albert has forwarded to you does so clearly and concisely, and really deserves your approbation.

'As matters now stand, it was necessary to come to an explanation. First of all, it must be made clear that the Spanish candidates are inadmissible. In this case it is

desirable for France to accept it. Without these two things the position of the candidates would be wretched. . . .

'If political difficulties were to arise in addition to this, the situation would be very painful. The affair will either come to nothing at all, or it will be accepted on tolerably good chances, and gives promise of being tenable.' Now when one remembers that Maria Christina had meantime learned that her letter had caused great vexation in London, so that Lord Aberdeen wished for that reason to recall his envoys, as has already been mentioned, it may be understood that, in her correspondence of June and July with King Louis Philippe, the Coburg candidature was no longer thought of, and that she regarded our final answer only as a matter of form. I sent the letter word for word, as appeared to be desired by my brother and uncle. Albert had given his motives for it in a long epistle, and I, for my part, could not see the slightest reason for crossing the wishes of the English sovereigns, but I must confess just here, that I could not understand why they afterwards opposed King Louis Philippe so eagerly.

On the 2nd of June my brother very calmly replied to my communication of the preliminary answer which I had given Queen Christina.

'Your reply to Queen Christina was cautious and wise, and cannot further compromise the matter. We have, as yet, had no reply to Lord Aberdeen's exposition to Comte St Aulaire. Further steps in opposition to France would probably cost Guizot his elections and his Ministry. I have therefore nothing to add at present to my last letter concerning this matter.'

And now followed, under the same date on which King Leopold despatched me the above quoted letter, my brother's decisive one, which was equally pregnant with fates for Spain and for the Anglo-French Alliance:

'*Buckingham Palace, August 5th* 1846.

'DEAR ERNEST,—I send you Benda as courier, who will carry this letter to you. The object of it is the Spanish affair, which is daily becoming more involved, not being made easier by the substitution of Lord Palmerston for Lord

Aberdeen, and which may bring universal danger through the really insane persistency of Louis Philippe and Guizot in obtaining what they have demanded. It is clear to us, that even if Leopold can be placed on the throne by the desire of Queen Christina, it will give him no chance of success, if he has all France as a personal enemy, and Don Enrique at the head of the Spanish Democrats, supported by Lord Palmerston and the *Morning Chronicle*, as a political rival in Spain. The Bourbons and Don Enrique are impossibles, but this must first be recognised by Spain herself and by France, before another can have any chances. Poor Queen Christina is meantime being shamefully treated on account of the step she took with you, and in France people go so far as to burden poor Ferdinand with all possible difficulties, in order to be able to use his inability as a reason against Leopold.

'The Queen is still expecting a definite answer from you, to her letter written three months ago, and which cannot, for the sake of decency, remain any longer neglected. I send you herewith the substance of the letter which Victoria, King Leopold and I should like you to write. It has been composed after long reflection, accurate inquiry into the state of affairs, and in complete unison with the position which we have taken in the matter, and I beg that you will adopt it *word for word*, and send us the letter sealed and addressed to the Queen through Benda as soon as possible; we will then see that the further necessary steps are taken with it.

'*P.S.*—You should send Uncle Ferdinand a copy of your letter to the Queen of Spain by a *sure* messenger. He must be made acquainted with the matter, and it is best it should be done through you.'

As a supplement to the foregoing, a notice may here be added, taken from a later letter of my brother's, written on the 31st of August, concerning the attitude of the English Government. For before the letter desired by my relations had reached Queen Christina, the new Ministry had already taken powerful measures to embitter her to the utmost against everything which might be advised or expected of her

in England, through their support of Don Enrique's candidature.

Concerning this, my brother wrote to me at the above-mentioned date, with a calmness which, when I compared it with the excitement of the English Court afterwards, filled me with astonishment:

'I have sent your letter to Madrid; Lord Palmerston is exerting himself to secure Don Enrique's success. As he lies within the French candidature, and Lord Palmerston has the task of not falling out with Louis Philippe, nothing can be done to oppose it.'

That, however, under these circumstances, my letter to Queen Christina was indeed to be regarded only as a matter of politeness, seems clear, and I may add, that the further course of affairs therefore surprised me far less, not to say that I was not inclined after that to judge Louis Philippe's conduct too strictly.

The above-mentioned draft of the letter to the Queen ran as follows:—

'To Her Majesty

'The Queen Dowager of Spain.

'Madam,—Your Majesty has too thorough a knowledge of the affairs and the political situation of Europe, not to have already explained to yourself the reasons for the delay which I have made in sending a more positive answer to the letter with which Your Majesty has honoured me. Nevertheless, I have been anxious to enter into details with regard to this matter, that my silence might not be attributed to indifference, with regard to the high proof of confidence which Your Majesty has given me. Your Majesty had hardly taken this step before it was known in Paris and elsewhere.

'This kind of publicity has already given rise to a preliminary and great difficulty, the gravity of which cannot but be recognised by Your Majesty. Nevertheless, that alone would not have stopped me, if, on arrival in England, I had not encountered others still, which in some degree forced inaction upon me. I found the English Ministry disposed to abandon the direction of affairs, and no resolution could be made before knowing what political opinion the new Cabinet,

whose advent was daily expected, would entertain with regard to this important affair.

'At length my uncle, the King of the Belgians, sent me word that he intended to go to England, and to make the important news which I had received, the subject of a serious conversation with Her Majesty Queen Victoria, my brother Prince Albert, and the English Ministers.

'This gave me a new motive for awaiting the result of the consultation.

'I am happy, madam, to be able to answer Your Majesty to-day. You are aware that His Majesty the King of the French, persisting in his first declaration that the hand of the Queen, your august daughter, ought by right, to be bestowed upon a Prince of the House of Burgundy, has until now shown himself hostile to the combination which Your Majesty has with equal constancy ever preferred to any other.

'Given this state of things, and the question having been examined in every light in London, it has seemed, madam, that, in the interest of Spain as well as that of the happiness of Spain's sovereign, it would be of importance not to provoke the enmity of a neighbour whose concurrence or opposition would always be of such great weight.

'Besides this, it seems that the position of a Prince who, on his arrival, would have to struggle against this enmity and against the opinion that a Spanish Prince would better fulfil the wishes of the nation, that this position, I say, would become very difficult, even dangerous, unless it has been previously ascertained that there exist insurmountable objections to the choice of a Bourbon, and that this conviction has entered the minds of the Powers who defended Spain by the treaty of the Quadruple Alliance, and particularly of the august head of the House of Bourbon, who seems to be far from entertaining any such conviction.

'Your Majesty will understand that any other step would expose Spain to unpleasant complications, and would be contrary to the resolution formed by Her Majesty Queen Victoria not to depart from the line of conduct laid down by her Ministry. I have reason to believe that at the present moment Your Majesty has learned through your ordinary correspondence with London the developments necessary to

understand this thought which I look upon as being full of wisdom and prudence and dictated entirely by the most disinterested views.

'When Your Majesty receives these ulterior explanations, whether written or verbal, you will, I hope, be convinced that I shall be as highly flattered by the continuation of your confidence as I was by the first mark I received of it.

'Accept, madam, the expression of the sentiments with which I am Your Majesty's devoted cousin

ERNEST.'

Matters at the Spanish Court now began to take a rapid course. The more Lord Palmerston tried to work for Don Enrique, the better became the prospects of his brother, the Duke of Cadiz, whom Guizot now began to declare openly was the only possible candidate. But Isabella's marriage with this pitifully weak man was to secure a particular triumph for French politics through the simultaneous union of Isabella's sister with the Duc de Montpensier.

The more the French Court saw themselves nearing the longed-for goal, the cleverer they grew in diplomatic tricks. It soon began to be said that Bresson in Madrid had abused his authority, and Louis Philippe's manner of dealing was soon justified by the Coburg candidature. Seldom has political material so much resembling a comedy led to such tragic results.

It will be understood that I omit to multiply the anecdotes which this affair recalls to my mind. The Infant Franz de Paula, who was now to become King of Spain, was naturally the subject of endless tales. The fact that Queen Isabella did not remain ignorant of how little her married happiness was considered in the choice of a husband, gave rise to the bitterest sarcasm.

Whilst the uncharitable world was jesting over these little stories, which were not exactly calculated to recommend the monarchical principle in Europe, hardly any one imagined that a fit of ill-temper had broken out amongst the confederates of Eu over the mad marriage affair, which did indeed obtain great influence over a course of historical events, and which so greatly and essentially helped to ship-

wreck the foundering boat of royalty of the July monarchy in France.

In these days this great difference between the monarchs of the West is not known in its smallest details, and the statesmen concerned therein, as well as the monarchs themselves, have most copiously explained their policy and the steps they took, and attempted to give their reasons for them and to justify them.

In the Queen's book about my brother much space was devoted to the affair, and there is probably hardly any thoughtful historian who would not give a testimonial of honour and love of truth to the plain, noble letters of Queen Victoria as compared with the interminable effusions of Louis Philippe,—particularly those addressed to his daughter, King Leopold's consort.

Everything which the Queen of England said and wrote about this affair bears the impress of deep wounding of a heart inclined to friendliness only, but it is not to be denied that the indecision and change of policy of the English Ministers had made it quite impossible for the noble Queen to take up from the first a position which would have assured our not being duped by France. That this painful feeling existed in England, and that the anger aroused by it became greater and greater, can be followed stage by stage, as it were, in a letter from my brother.

'You also,' he wrote on the 17th of September 1846, from Osborne, 'will have wondered at the sudden, remarkable issue of the Spanish affair.

'Nothing can be more perfidious than the policy followed by the French Court. They have cheated us, and are now triumphing; a poor triumph to have duped a friend, and the only one whom one has, and at the moment when he is offering a sacrifice to his friendship. For the poor Queens clung to Leopold up to the last moment, and only gave it up when Bulwer declared to them that we could not give our consent to it, and must appear for Don Enrique, who, as a Bourbon, had the consent of France also.

'Upon this, Bresson took advantage of the vexation of the ladies to press Don Francesco upon them . . . and settled with the Infanta about Montpensier. King Louis

Philippe had given us his word of honour never to think of the second marriage until the Queen was married and had children, *et cela ne serait pas une affaire politique.*

'He now explains that he is released from his promise, because Leopold was named as a candidate, which Aberdeen had promised should never happen. Quite a discovery! The good understanding has ceased to exist, but it will now no more be said "no moving, no rattling," for we are justly highly provoked. In Spain the populace are in the greatest commotion. We must follow the proverb: "Honour lasts the longest."'

A far calmer conception of the matter was King Leopold's, who, without hesitation, made Lord Palmerston answerable for the bad issue of the affair.

'The Spanish story,' he wrote to me on the 13th of November, 'could not have failed had it not been for Lord Palmerston, for by chosing Don Enrique and wishing to bring the Progressionists to Spain with him, he forced Queen Christina to make a quick end of the matter.'

And he watched with anxiety the ever widening gulf between the two Western Powers, through which the whole system which had ruled politics since the year 1830, threatened to be overthrown.

'The great policy,' complained the King on the 25th of February 1847,—is, unfortunately, since such a high stand has been taken in England with more zeal than patience, in a highly precarious condition.'

If Queen Victoria again at the end of September, in her beautiful and dignified letter to the Queen Louisa of Belgium expressed the expectation that the Spanish double marriage must yet retrograde, this hope was quickly dispelled:

The double wedding was celebrated as early as the 10th of October, in Madrid. But Queen Victoria had rightly conjectured, when she said that this event would bring great dangers to the family of Orleans itself.

It finally came to grief, not in Spain, but in France. But, also in the land where the French Cabinet thought to have obtained an irresistible influence by means of the double marriage, it had an incredibly quick defeat.

Queen Isabella's consort, was in a few weeks driven from

the side of his newly made bride. The Duc de Montpensier did not succeed in gaining the slightest influence in Spain. If the Government was not entirely given over to a favourite, the reason was that he had been perhaps too much pressed upon the Queen. She united herself politically to the Progressionists, and the rule of the Moderados was broken up by Pacheco and Salamanca. Queen Christina retired to Paris, and though Narvaez again succeeded in October 1847 in placing himself at the head of the Ministry, yet it was impossible for him to imagine that he was thereby making peace with Espartero and the Progressionists.

Guizot's French policy, in spite of its dazzling exterior, had suffered a defeat from which it never recovered.

Spain's political relations and the complication of the House of Coburg in the same, have meantime led me far from the path in my recital, which, as the reader will remember, I entered upon with my travelling companions in the spring of 1846. Just as the friendly neighbourhood of Portugal drew us from the coasts of Spain and Africa, so might there be said to exist a certain parallel and inner connection between the political conditions of the two Iberian kingdoms.

This circumstance will allow me to bring the small events of our journey into a certain connection with the universal condition and political occurrences of those days, and to let them appear in my description as forming an inseparable whole in the mind of the writer.

The reader will, therefore, merely be requested to leave the confusion of angry despatches and documents relating to the great worldly negotiations and return to the quiet diaries which we kept during our travels, undisturbed and without any thought of the political manœuvres of the southern world.

After a two days' voyage from Gibraltar on the *Phœnix* we landed on the forenoon of the 11th of May, in Belem near Lisbon, where the whole Royal Family of Portugal were assembled, and made our appearance at a time when the country, only then quieted, stood on the brink of a new and lasting revolution.

Already on my first visit to Portugal, I had had opportunities of learning and valuing Queen Maria's great superiority,

and now the bravery with which she behaved under the most difficult circumstances, precisely during our presence in Portugal, showed a rare degree of strength of mind.

The impression which this great woman made upon us all in the midst of the revolutionary struggle was indescribably deep. In order to describe her in this character, I will recall one special occurrence which is still vivid to my recollection.

It was on the 24th of May, whilst we were taking a long ride with their Majesties in the neighbourhood of Lisbon. In the capital the opposing parties had come to open conflict. A portion of the troops stood by the Government, and then fought with the Opposition in the streets. Whilst everything made us feel as if the city and its surroundings were in open revolution, the Queen was everywhere greeted by the people with enthusiasm.

Late in the evening we sat at tea on the terrace in Belem; just in front of the Rhede lay a frigate ordered there to protect the Royal Family, her band was playing the well-known Gabriel waltz, as if in irony. From the other side of the Tagus, where stood Fort Almada, on a high mountain ridge, one could hear the thundering of cannon, and the rattle of the musketry of attacking columns could be distinguished.

The fort was manned by hardly more than a company of Royal troops, and the personal safety of the Queen hung without doubt in no small degree upon whether they would be able to hold their position.

The fighting lasted for more than an hour, only the hoarse cries of the attacking party and the noise of firearms did not lessen until towards midnight. But the Queen had hardly paid any real attention to the exciting scene. When she retired, her spirits seemed to be the same as they were on any other evening. We others, however, thought that a catastrophe might occur at any moment, to which opinion we were all the more inclined by the King's earnestness. We therefore threw on our national uniforms and remained together until morning, when everything at length seemed to have grown quiet.

When the Queen heard of it the next day, she laughed at the men's cautiousness, and would on no account admit that the revolution could become dangerous for her. She felt

safe in the consciousness of her good intentions, and nothing was more just than the words written in the Duchess's diary concerning her and King Ferdinand:

'I can speak of both of them only with admiration, and prize the courage and devotion with which they, particularly Donna Maria, in her advanced state, bears all the adversities, and boldly and steadfastly face the dangers which threaten them. She is a dear, strong, honourable soul, whom one must heartily love and respect, when one has the good fortune to know her intimately.'

The political troubles did not prevent the Court from going over to Cintra with us, whence we made the most interesting excursions; the castle and magnificent park of Péna particularly occupied our attention. On the way thither we went through Quelus Castle, where, in the billiard saloon, an eye-witness, General Count St Leger, showed us the spot where King Don Miguel had throttled his friend Marquis Loulé, in the presence of the Court, after a dispute which he had had with him between the acts of an amateur theatrical performance.

Our stay in Portugal had lasted nearly a month. At length, after a painful farewell, we sailed up the Tagus in a royal steamer, on the 12th of June, and joined the English man-of-war *Polyphemus*, which soon bore us out to sea. Several times we watched the eastern horizon to see the appearing and disappearing coasts of the beautiful land which we had left so unwillingly, in the troubled times of a threatened civil war. But we were soon beyond Oporto and Cape Finisterre, and after a stormy passage we landed in Southampton Harbour.

As has already been mentioned, our plan of travel was at last altered, and it was possible for us to see the Queen and Albert once more, which made a charming ending to our eventful journey. My unsought-for political experiences, which I had gained during my stay in the Peninsula, supplied much food for conversation, but no one dreamed as yet that all these events would afterwards have the sad ending which has already been related.

We spent a few pleasant days at Osborne, after landing at Cowes on the 19th, and celebrated my birthday in the circle

of the Royal Family, which had been rejoiced four weeks previously by the birth of the Princess Helena.

On the 22nd of June we started for Ostend, stayed three days in Laeken with King Leopold, and returned home on the 27th of June, by way of Mainz and Frankfort, happy and gay.

Meanwhile, after our departure, affairs had remained so complicated in Portugal, that great circumspection and attention were necessary before one could venture upon giving an opinion concerning them. The most decisive point was, that the constitutional forms here, as everywhere, had not produced so quick and satisfying an improvement in the universal condition of the State as was everywhere anticipated with unfortunate haste in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The character of the southerners, the deep complication of the army in the political relations, and the ease with which the different parties could enrich themselves at the cost of the State, continually inclined the constitutional diseases of Portugal to revolution.

The change of officials was carried as far as the lowest grades at every change of Government, the army took part in every political affair through the exchanging of most of the officers. Added to this, England's influence as an outsider made itself felt, and English politics might be called anything else than disinterested in Portugal.

During the six years since I had seen the country, much had apparently been done. Improvements in every way could plainly be seen. A beginning had at last been made of the restoration of the streets. Many new buildings which General Eschwege was superintending in the Royal Castle at Péna, lent greater splendour to the Court.

The outside affairs of the Royal Household, particularly, had been put in order by our frequently mentioned Coburg fellow-countryman, Dietz. In the administration of the State, the continual change of Ministry and the never-dying inclination of the nobility to enrich themselves by gaining possession of offices of State, was still the order of the day, but here also one could see the beginning of better arrangements.

The middle classes began to rise, feeling the need of peace

and order, and gradually became a securer support for the monarchy. All this progress advanced slowly, but could be seen, even if the noise of outside events and party strife often over-clouded it.

In England, however, people were inclined to regard the continual revolutionary movements as the consequences of bad management for which the Court was universally held answerable. And as the English Chargés d'Affairs desired to conceal their unpopularity in the country and at Court, they took care to represent a man who deserved the utmost from Portugal and the Royal Family as the real scapegoat of all wrong-doing. Dietz was the man in whose path the diplomates seemed to stand, and, wonderful to say, our cousin Alexander Mensdorff, whom Queen Victoria had repeatedly trusted with the examination of affairs, was not exactly favourably inclined towards King Ferdinand's unpretending German governor.

In consequence of all these circumstances a formal circle of traditions was formed around the man who was really deserving of the greatest thanks from the Royal House, and had exercised the most beneficial influence over the condition of the country. The English papers, which took their news from foreign officials, did not hesitate so to represent the case as if the disturbances in Lisbon had been directed particularly against Dietz, as a stranger and a favourite.

In some of the newspapers and books his departure from the Portuguese Court in the following year was hinted at as being a concession which had had to be made to the insurgent party, whereas it was just the contrary. Dietz had hardly a single enemy amongst the Portuguese politicians of all opinions, and least of all amongst the Progressionists, towards whom he seemed rather to be inclined through his liberal religious views. He knew so well how to keep within the limits assigned to a stranger, that he was hardly ever personally attacked by any party. His removal from Queen Maria's Court was solely the work of the English Cabinet, which was not a little surprised that, after he was gone, things in Portugal became not better, but worse.

Whereas Dietz restrained King Ferdinand from mixing himself up in the disputes of the clubs and the personal

rivalries of their leaders, the Court appeared afterwards to identify themselves more with the party position recommended by the English, and a scene which we ourselves had witnessed in Belem, in which the Queen stood entirely above the fighting factions, would hardly have been possible later on.

I will only shortly mention the common course of these events.

The revolution of 1846 was really nothing else than an attempt to break through the constitutional course of affairs which had grown peaceful some time back, by means of a coalition of the most extreme parties. Miguelists and Septembrists would have been too weak alone to shake the constitutional basis of the monarchy so lately obtained; the absolutists and church reactionaries tried what could be done by means of what has since then become known throughout all European countries as effective, by using Radicalism as a battering-ram against the constitution. Thus that fearful alliance was made between the two extremes, for the mastering of which the excellent Queen was no longer strong enough, but found it necessary to call in Spanish and English aid.

I had watched the mysterious beginning of this movement during our presence in Belem; a Palmella-Saldanha Ministry had been created. After the latter had come to an understanding with the Duke of Terceira in October, and had placed himself at the head of the Ministry, the Septembrists hoisted their insurrectionary flag at Oporto, where a provisionary government was formed under the rule of Dos Antas, la da Bandeira and Bomsin. The Queen was forced to support the constitutional law of guarantee, and a regular civil war broke out, in which both contending parties were counterbalanced.

Don Miguel was already preparing to make an expedition to Portugal, and in England the utmost was being done. Queen Victoria again sent Alexander Mensdorff to Lisbon, but the documents which are at my service concerning this remarkable episode of English politics, would be calculated not only to supplement the Blue-Book which Lord Palmerston at that time published concerning the Portuguese affair, but to refute it fully. But one would have to write a complete history of Portugal in order to show how entirely mistaken

the opinion was in England, particularly through Colonel Wylde's despatches, as he always tried to represent the revolutionists as a kind of English Whigs, and thus really gave rise to the antipathy against a monarchy which united in itself the most excellent domestic and statesman-like politics, and which, if rightly recognised, would without any doubt have won the greatest respect from the English nation itself.

King Leopold's judgment of the English policy, which he expressed to me on the 13th of November 1846, will be of interest here:

'The Portuguese affair appears in a bad light, I fear that it has been managed with great carelessness. England is behaving scandalously about it; she not only almost encouraged the rebellion, but she also hindered Spain from showing herself helpful, so that, after ruining Leopold's Spanish prospects, she will now perhaps be able to ruin Ferdinand.'

On the 6th of April 1847, the King expressed his opinion even more clearly, when he wrote: 'The times are now somewhat confused, to which, I must own, England, that is, the present Cabinet, has contributed beyond all expression. They have acted in a silly manner throughout the Spanish affair, and as Lord Palmerston feels this very much, he is becoming angry, coarse and threatening; all of which are leading him to commit fresh false steps; thus we now have unexpected traps set for us, possibilities of war, etc.'

Exactly a year after our presence in Belem, poor Donna Maria was forced to conclude this treaty of intervention in London on the 22nd of May 1847, which gave rise to great complaints against her on the part of the English Liberals. Meantime, Dos Antas had been taken prisoner with more than 2000 men, through Admiral Parker. In June 1847, Spanish troops entered Portugal under command of General Mendez Vigo, and garrisoned Braganza.

La da Bandeira gave himself up to the English at Setubal. Although the Junta at Oporta had still refused the conditions of peace, yet Oporto also was at length forced to capitulate to the Spanish troops. On the 2nd of July, Saldanha himself

marched in. The Queen promised a general amnesty, as soon as peace was restored after the summoning of the Cortes and the new elections had been settled.

Although in Portuguese matters the rivalry between France and England played a far smaller part than during similar events in Spain, yet in this case also the effect of the cessation of the *entente cordiale* was perceptible.

According to the principle of the agreements of the Quadruple Alliance, the intervention of Spain and England in Portugal was hardly possible without France's consent. During the whole matter, however, Louis Philippe was completely ignored. It was but a very poor consolation to the French Government, that the attempt was being made to convince the Liberals that Louis Philippe's Cabinet had purposely held themselves aloof from measures which they pretended to be so reactionary, like the suppression of the Portuguese revolution. In fact, the first plain answer to Louis Philippe's attitude in the marriage question was to be seen in England's independent, indiscreet conduct, in union with Spain. Louis Philippe was forced by the necessities of his position to take the last step on the steep declivity of his ever increasing unpopularity, and to seek support from Austria. Thus Metternich enjoyed the triumph of seeing the grey-haired favourite of revolution and his doctrinary Ministers going over to his camp, where all conservative forces—although very much weakened—had assembled together, in order to smother the encroaching fire of revolution in Italy, in Switzerland, and in Germany.

It is true that the new Austro-French alliance was to some degree endangered by the Polish affairs and the incorporation of Cracow. But Metternich sensibly added the unmeaning bombast of a French protest to his other documents, at the same time admitting the clever way in which the French Cabinet thought to have appeased the public opinion of the country. This was why Metternich had positively refused to take any part in a declaration against Montpensier's Spanish marriage, which Palmerston would have liked to obtain from all the Powers, and by this refusal delighted King Louis Philippe.

And now it came to pass that the King of the July

Revolution, hand in hand with Metternich, took the Jesuits in Switzerland under the common Protectorate. The alliance had reached the point when the two Powers had to meet in Switzerland, and furnish Europe with the comedy of two old enemies uniting in beautiful harmony in a military occupation which was to make the new order of things in Switzerland retrograde. The King of Prussia also showed his full gratification at the reactionary tendencies of both great Cabinets with regard to Switzerland, by sending Radowitz to Paris.

Louis Philippe likewise placed himself on Austria's side when she occupied Ferrara, in order to assure the peace of Italy even against the Pope's will.

Palmerston now found an opportunity of systematically undermining France's authority. As Louis Philippe had also united with Metternich in order to hold Italy in check by means of common military measures, and whilst Austria was reinforcing her troops in Lombardy, France gathered a corps together at Toulon, and held the transport fleet in readiness to go to Civita Vecchia, Lord Palmerston was supporting struggling Sardinia and the reforms in the ecclesiastical state, amidst the applause of the French Opposition.

With ever increasing blindness Guizot wrote to Prince Joinville:

'I do not trouble myself about the sudden growth of popularity with which England is now flaunting about in Italy. It is a hollow and vain popularity. . . . I know how to bear the fleeting unpopularity, and to wait for the lasting popularity.'

Three months later the kingdom of July was overthrown, and half Europe in revolution.

A description has often been given, and sometimes most excellently, and with many psychological characteristics, of the gradual, and as it were logically regular increasing transformation of Louis Philippe, from the most liberal and popular monarch, to the self-willed reactionary, but what is usually less considered, is the particulars of the Royal Family, which had far more influence over the course of events than is usually admitted.

Louis Philippe was a character full of personal and good-natured instincts. How greatly and deeply he was impressed

and influenced by the whole existence of his intensely amiable family, could only be rightly gauged when one had frequently seen and observed him in his patriarchal relations. His good humour was poured out on the things which did not belong to his household, on the State and her servants. He must and would have something personal in his relations with his Ministers.

Guizot's and Thiers' position is explained by this contradiction of sympathy and antipathy.

Guizot only considered his as being lasting from the moment when the former coldness was swallowed up in an honest friendship. Thiers and the King never understood one another, and a chasm which could not be bridged over always remained between them. When I saw Thiers a few years later in England, he once uttered the apposite remark to me:

'King Louis Philippe would never understand me.'

In fact, Louis Philippe felt a dislike for the little man which bordered on superstition. I still remember, during my first stay at the Royal Court, the amusing episode, when, as we were looking at the pictures at Versailles, Thiers, being very short-sighted, struck his nose very hard against an easel, and the King called out to him, amidst the laughter of all present, 'See what happens when one pokes one's nose into everything!'

Even in the last hours of his reign, when the King was trying to make up his mind to call Thiers to the wheel of state, the thought of abdication appeared to be almost more agreeable to him, than intercourse with the hated Minister. Louis Philippe was far more tired of reigning than incapable of doing so.

The greatest blow for Louis Philippe was and remained, as has already been remarked, the death of the Duke of Orleans. He was the King's counsellor. After the loss of the Duke, there was no one in the family with whom Louis Philippe sought a hearty understanding, or found harmony, especially as the Princes Joinville and Aumale were in Africa at the most decisive moments. The King was thus thrown back upon the ladies, who, however, depended entirely upon the clergy.

Of his sons, Nemours alone was not a Radical. There were frightful scenes and disputes with Joinville. When Joinville published his well-known pamphlet, Louis Philippe was thunderstruck. He never quite recovered from this 'fall of his House,' as he called it, and had serious thoughts of abdicating the throne. It is known to but few that the King had for some time entertained a wish to place the Government in the hands of his son-in-law, the King of the Belgians, for his grandson, who was under age. Perhaps he had not yet entirely dismissed the idea of uniting with Belgium. I recollect that my uncle once jokingly said to me: 'Yes, the old gentleman likes to eat his soup himself.'

There was therefore a certain feeling of insecurity and weakness in the Tuileries from the year 1846, and matters grew more and more gloomy.

The King's sons enjoyed unlimited consideration and the greatest respect in the army, but their dependence on the King prevented them from venturing upon taking matters in hand at the right time. If the dynasty had decided upon using force under all circumstances, there would have been no danger for the House of Orleans in France. But the dagger had fallen from the King's hand long before the reform banquet, and he might well shudder at the thought that his reign could be upheld only by means of bloodshed.

His nature grew to a certain degree effeminate, and it is perhaps interesting to know that in this respect a book which then occupied his attention, produced rather a weakening effect upon him: Lamartine's 'Girondists.' The King not only read this work aloud to his family in the evening, but supplemented it with explanations from his lively recollections. Thus in his old age he lived again amongst the terrors of his youth, and pictures of misery and banishment were constantly flitting before the eyes of the ladies of his House.

Behind the seemingly firm character of the King lay a hidden feeling of intimidation over which the priest-led women had the greatest influence. It thus happened that he no longer had the firmness to strike when the hour of danger arrived, although the army was thoroughly faithful and trustworthy. I saw him in 1849 at Richmond during his banishment; he was still greatly excited when he spoke of the end of his reign.

Pacing up and down he said with his old familiar vivacity: '*Je vous expliquerai tout. Mes Ministres m'ont trompé sur la situation; ce n'est que l'ambition de M. Thiers qui amena la chute du trône.*' He would have been powerful enough to resist every opposition of the masses, but he said: '*J'ai vu assez de sang.*' He often repeated these last words, the same with which he had refused on the decisive day to order the troops to the attack.

CHAPTER VIII

REVOLUTIONARY FEELING IN GERMANY.—TRAGI-COMIC VIEW OF THE SITUATION.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GREAT POWERS OF EUROPE.—THE DUKE VISITS BERLIN, BRUSSELS, AND LONDON, ON A VOYAGE OF OBSERVATION.—BUNSEN AND PRINCE ALBERT DESIRE A JUNCTION BETWEEN ENGLAND AND PRUSSIA.—RELUCTANCE OF THE PRUSSIAN KING.—FLIGHT OF LOUIS PHILIPPE.—HASTY RETURN HOME.—DEATH OF THE DUKE'S GRANDMOTHER.—REFORM IN THE LAWS OF GOTHA.—VON STEIN'S LETTER TO THE DUKE.—ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION IN GOTHA.—SYMPTOMS OF DISCONTENT IN COBURG AND GOTHA.—DEMAND FOR A GERMAN PARLIAMENT, ETC.—THE COBURG ADDRESS.—THE DUKE'S REPLY.—SOCIALISTIC TENDENCIES IN THE THURINGIAN STATES.—THE DUKE'S LETTER TO KING LEOPOLD.—RIOTS IN COBURG AND GOTHA.—PROMPTLY SUPPRESSED.—THE CASE OF CELLA ST BLASII.—'THE GRACE OF GOD.'—THE GAME LAWS RELAXED.—THE QUESTION OF THE COBURG-GOTHA UNION.—THE DUKE OFFERS TO OPEN THE DIET IN HUNTING DRESS.—COLLAPSE OF THE CAVILLERS AT STATE.—HIS SCHEMES OF REFORM.—HIS POSITION SECURE.—THE VISIT TO ALTENBURG.—WEIMAR DESIRES TO HEAD A THURINGIAN CONFEDERACY.—LETTER TO PRINCE ALBERT.—THE CONFERENCE.—SUPPRESSION OF THE RISING IN REINARDSBRUNN.—PRINCE ALBERT'S VIEWS TOUCHING THE THURINGIAN KINGDOM.—KING LEOPOLD'S LETTER.—VON STEIN'S OPINION.—PRINCE ALBERT'S MEMORIAL.—VISIT TO DRESDEN.—CONDITION OF SAXON COURT AND MINISTRY.—BRÖHMER AND VON STEIN.—THE DUKE'S LETTER TO BRÖHMER.—HIS REPLY.—IN SCHLESWIG.—RETURN TO GOTHA.

To the events of the year 1848 one might apply the maxim that that which we most certainly expect to happen always astonishes us the most. It had long been known that we were on the eve of great agitations and important public changes, and many had drawn the political horscope of 1848 almost entirely correctly, but no one had any idea of the mad doings and remarkable actions which were to follow the March days. Everyone everywhere had long been watching for the expected outbreak of the volcano, but no one seemed

to be prepared to be personally attacked by the fire which was to burst forth from the soil in every spot.

Thus all Germany was outflanked by the events which took place, and most Governments lost their balance, and even their self-possession, at the first shock.

I can certainly count myself amongst those who had foreseen the revolution in our own lands also, but what came upon me unexpectedly was the universality of its effects, and the synchronism of its appearance in both large and small States. What astonished me most was the total want of power of opposition in the Government authorities, and the helplessness with which the whole company, high and low, allowed themselves to fall a prey, some to the most foolish notions, others to the most paralysing terror. One witnessed scenes of deepest dejection on the one hand, and shamelessness on the other, which would never have been possible if strength, insight, and quiet of conscience had not been wanting in the right place and at the proper time.

In most States the power was snatched suddenly, entirely and hopelessly out of the hands of the reigning sovereigns. The organs of public power, filled with secret sympathy for the revolution, refused service, as often from desire as from cowardice. Throughout the official world a deeply penetrating feeling of discontent had ripened. The principal reason of this phenomenon lay in the widely spread feeling against the unfounded partiality to the nobility, who, without there being any either physical or moral justification for it, had been appointed to the high positions and offices of most States. Besides this, there was, amongst the lower grades of the all-powerful bureaucracy, a kind of emulation which was to help to raise the flood of revolution to higher places and greater devastation. The oftener and more enduringly the Ministerial portfolios were changed in the thirty-six States of Germany during the endless agitation, the better was the progress made by the younger officials who occupied inferior positions.

Thus the incarnate bureaucratic spirit, which Germany had controlled since the Peace of Westphalia, had as it were attested its possession of a lash with which blows were struck against the higher classes, and most of all against the reigning sovereigns. And, remarkable to relate, hardly any-

one had noticed, amidst the wild doings, that this professional envoy amongst the officials steadily increased the evil, and that the seat of the disease, now become chronic, was therefore not to be radically cured because those who should have restored order rather secretly undermined it.

As is known, the poet Hebbel has described a state of things in his 'Tragedy in Sicily,' when the guardians of the law themselves become criminals, and thought by the introductory words in this antithesis to have correctly disclosed the nature of the tragi-comical. In a certain sense the contents of the piece were descriptive of the revolution in Germany, where the appointed representatives of order had, it is true, not become thieves and robbers, but by means of every kind of political neglect of duty gave an impulse to the movement and with faces full of innocence helped to increase and promote the want of presence of mind and helplessness.

Herein there certainly lay something tragi-comical, which involuntarily strikes us when we refresh our memories concerning the year 1848, with its sad and serious events and its comical episodes. It was only natural that people should be unmanned at that time by the tragic side of things, whereas afterwards everything seemed to be forgotten in the foolishness and laughableness of those days. Thus the descriptions of this intricate state of affairs is always in danger of leaning too much to the one side or the other, so that a ridiculous picture of this excited period may well be considered as one of the greatest rareties. In this twofold nature of the agitation lies the reason why there is hardly a single history of this revolution which suitably describes the real state of affairs. Some darken the picture through too great and often mistaken pathos, the others flatter it by under-estimating the deep seriousness and really sad moments of this strange epoch.

At the beginning of the year the political situation had ripened into a serious difference between the Great Powers of Europe. The dangers of a new alliance, of unexpected changes of the political balance were added to the strong home disquiet felt in every State on the Continent. The cessation of the *entente cordiale*, which I have already described, gave rise to a certain uneasiness in England. As the

French King was seen to be returning to the path followed by old reactionary Europe, the entirely unprotected state of their coasts, the deficiency of their military arrangements recurred forcibly to the English, and the Duke of Wellington thought it expedient to restore the courage of his countrymen by assuring them that their insular position by no means offered that guarantee which they regarded as in every case desirable.

The thought entertained by old English politicians, that the mistress of the seas would not be able to entirely dispense with a Continental alliance, was again awakened to a lively degree in the circles of the English Government during the time of the withdrawal from the French Alliance.

Russia and Prussia had not yet entirely committed themselves to the new Austro-French Alliance, but a great deal was already being done to bring about a close Confederacy of the four great Continental Powers, in order to be able in future to face the serious condition of Southern Europe with greater success. It must have been in a great degree tempting to Russia to try to draw nearer to France by means of Austria, in order to isolate England all the more.

In this state of things, my brother naturally fixed his gaze with preference upon Prussia, from whom he hoped that, through the King's advanced views, she would now be most certainly driven to join with England. Already for two years past he had, as we have seen, been trying to get nearer to the King of Prussia in this respect. Through Bunsen's position as Prussian Ambassador to the English Court the idea of an understanding between the two kingdoms had as it were been outwardly represented and constantly kept awake. The so-called friendship of the King for Bunsen moreover allowed the latter again and again to rouse the deceptive hope that Frederick William IV, would soon free himself from his Austrian engagements as well as his equally conditional submission to the Emperor Nicholas.

Amongst these general political constellations a voyage of observation which I undertook in the beginning of the year 1848 to the Court of Berlin, as well as to my relations in Brussels and London, will be of the very greatest interest. On the 22nd of January, I went to the Prussian capital, and had an

opportunity of thoroughly seeing through the political situation there. Whilst a strong sense of power began to make itself felt amongst the masses, in the Government there was vacillation and uncertainty of every kind. The whole state of things gave one a very uneasy impression. The Ministry appeared neither to be rightly informed of the danger of its position, nor to have reached any maturity of thought. I found the King himself without an idea of what the future had in store for him, yet full of uneasiness and irresolution. He would on no account realise that the Kingdom had come to an end in France, he insisted that Louis Philippe would long remain upon the throne. The Crown Prince of Prussia took a more pessimistic view of things, and therefore came to the right conclusion that something must necessarily be done for German affairs, and that very soon.

The fact that the incitement in this respect was expected of Prussia had not passed unnoticed in the Government circles of Berlin, but everyone was totally ignorant concerning the proposals of reform which would perhaps have had to be made in the Diet. The so-called demands in accordance with the age for freedom of the Press and the constitution in the Confederate States remained highly distasteful to the King; a transformation of the Confederacy, in the sense of a more united guidance by Prussia, was indeed, as we know, recognised as necessary on many sides, but the decisive word which hovered on every lip could not be uttered out of consideration for the friendly Governments.

As far as the junction with Prussia, wished for by my brother and recommended by Bunsen, regarded English politics, Frederick William IV shuddered at it principally on account of the favour shown by the English Cabinet to the ever-increasing revolutionary action in Italy. That there might be a policy for Prussia which would be able in any way to oppose Austria's traditional power in Italy, was looked upon by the King as a mere nothing. When I was in Berlin he could not say anything bad enough against a Cabinet which seemed to be acting in concert with the hated conspirators of Italy.

If, notwithstanding, the King established friendly relations with the English Court, and particularly with my brother

through me, and to some degree in opposition to the English Cabinet, yet one could not help feeling convinced that a formal renunciation and separation of Prussia from her old alliances and friendships would soon be again regarded in London as a chimera of Bunsen's brain, for the realisation of which there was not the slightest grounds for hope.

I had enough opportunities in Berlin to notice that there would be a want of energy should an unexpected catastrophe occur; and on the 22nd of February I left the Prussian capital in a most uneasy state of mind concerning the immediate future. The Duchess, who had followed me to Berlin, accompanied me to Brussels, whither we went by way of Cologne, and where I found King Leopold as full of care, and as much affected by the condition of French affairs as Frederick William had shown himself confident. My uncle uttered remarks full of foreboding concerning the state of things in Paris, and explained that Louis Philippe's position was hopeless. 'My father-in-law,' he told me, 'will soon be driven away, like Charles X. The catastrophe is coming unavoidably over France, and, in consequence, into Germany also.' That his words were to prove true, even before we had returned to Germany, would certainly never have been imagined.

On the 6th of February we embarked at Ostend on the *Guarland*, bound for Dover, and reached Windsor at five o'clock in the afternoon. Here and in Claremont, as well as in London, we spent the decisive four weeks of the eventful year, during which the volcano had at length burst forth. Prince Albert and the Queen were almost hourly expecting the weighty event, and it was looked upon as almost self-understood that it must come, when the news arrived from Paris on the 24th of February.

Louis Philippe's arrival in England, and the tragic fate of the whole House who were so closely allied to our family, kept us in as great suspense from day to day, as if we ourselves had been immediately affected by the revolution. The exciting circumstances under which almost the entire family of Orleans was dispersed, and the sad experiences of many of its single members made a painful impression. It is sufficiently well-known how the poor Duchess de Montpensier arrived in England after manifold adventures, destitute of the most

necessary things, so that the Queen was obliged to send her clothing before she could see her at Windsor.* I myself welcomed the Duc de Nemours when he landed. The Queen sent a special train to Dover to bring him quickly to London. It would be tiresome to recall all the scenes which we were continually witnessing.

The news which came to me from my own territories made it necessary for me to hasten my departure from England. A family bereavement, which furnished a bad sign for the beginning of the year was not spared us in these days of political excitement. During our stay in England my grandmother, the Duchess Caroline, died in Gotha, on the 22nd of February, and from this moment, news of misfortunes was showered upon us from home. My Minister, von Stein, also, did not spare most pressing warnings for us to return. He wished for my personal co-operation in Thuringian affairs, which were daily assuming a worse appearance, and told me in every letter that my presence was greatly desired in both lands.

I may say that public opinion in these difficult times was rather for than against me, and that from the March days to the end of the hard times during the year 1848, Ministers and officials invariably looked to me as the man who would protect them against the approaching storm, whereas only too many sovereigns in Germany were forced to seek shelter against the perversity of their own subjects behind the transitory popularity of their hastily changed Ministries.

Already, before my departure from Gotha in January, I had a fresh opportunity of showing my advanced opinions, by publishing on the 19th a law concerning the publicity of the transactions of the board of aldermen. Two days later I received the representatives of the States who were present in Gotha at the meeting of the Deputies, and expressed to them my conviction of the untenableness and faultiness of the constitutional state of our land.

It would not therefore have been my fault if improvements in this respect had not been made. It was not long before I received information from Herr von Stein concerning loud expressions of discontent with the existing arrangements

* Prince Albert II, 24. Hillebrand II, 786.

for Gotha. On the 9th of February the Minister wrote to me in London:

'YOUR HIGHNESS,— . . . . The observer cannot but notice a slight irritability in the masses against the indolence of former days. The old company, thoroughly material as it was, is dying away by degrees, and the new one is even more hot about political questions. This was particularly to be seen, for example, in the representations of pieces of a tendency like "Zopf und Schwert" and "Uriel Acosta," in which certain portions were very quickly caught up and applauded, which never used to happen. The petition also, concerning which I asked Your Highness some time ago, and a copy of which I enclose, is circulating more and more widely throughout the land, and has, as I hear, many signatures.

'A little while ago about twelve mayors from good places in the country were together on business concerning fire insurances, and von Buszleben, who is something of a scholar, as well as an uhlan and a lover of sport, brought the conversation round to the constitution, and all had soon agreed that "we are just as good as the Coburgers, we want a share in the country too!"

'Your Highness will not believe that such speeches can disquiet me, but in such small signs one sees the times, and whoever takes no notice of them will never be able to foresee the political weather. Your Highness is also sufficiently acquainted with my opinions concerning the constitutional question, therefore I will be silent on that subject, but I think it impossible to repeat one thing too often. The later steps are taken for the unavoidably necessary reform of the state of the country here, the farther we shall have to go. The expectations increase every year, the demands grow more pressing, and what was gladly accepted last year is hardly sufficient this year, and will on no account be satisfactory next year. Conservative Trütschler even said to me yesterday: "It can't go on thus any longer, we must have another mediation here."'

Revolution was already in sight after the lapse of four weeks. 'Until to-day,' wrote Stein, 'we have succeeded in keeping peace and lawful order in town and country tolerably

well, yes, in comparison with many other places, I may even say very well. The good people of Gotha are, however, becoming more excited day by day, and I will not undertake to keep lawful order three days longer, if Your Highness does not return home meanwhile. It is not necessary for me to give any assurance of the real longing with which I await Your Highness's return.'

I was already on my way home. We had left England on the 4th of March, and were hastening back by way of Ostend, Brussels and Cologne. A short stay with my uncle inspired me with the pleasant conviction that the waves of the French Revolution were breaking over the constitutional kingdom of Belgium. I also talked the Gotha constitutional question over with King Leopold, and was happy to see that he agreed with my views and plans on all points.

I had worked out a constitutional project suited to the state of things in Gotha, which received the entire approbation of the King.

On the evening of the 7th March, I met the Duchess in Gotha, and was received with enthusiasm by a densely crowded mass of people. On the same evening I signed a decree which abolished all censure of the Press.

The petitions which reached me during the next few days were reasonable and sensible, and I did not think it necessary to feel any anxiety concerning the maintenance of peace in Gotha. The members of the committee of the deputation of the same representatives who had curtly refused my proposals a year before, had now come to beg me to give them a representative constitution. They asked for laws, according to the times and the states of the country, for all the subjects of the country, which would enable them to participate in the making of laws and the management of the income of the State, and I could only refer to the fact that, as was known, my intentions concerning the same had up to the present been opposed by the States' representatives alone.

A petition of town and country parishes which stated their motives in a somewhat circumstantial, yet most reasonable and becoming form, showed both knowledge, learning and goodwill in the representatives of the country up to that time, and hardly contained more than the request of which it

was known how greatly it corresponded with my views and wishes.

Thus, on the 15th of March, I could send out a proclamation with good courage and without the slightest appearance of compulsion, in which there was a prospect given of a representative constitution for the Duchy of Gotha, founded on the same principles as that of the Duchy of Coburg. But my desire was, now as before, to unite the new constitutional law with the existing state of representation.

The Government therefore expressed their intention of summoning the country according to the old form. The proclamation to the Extraordinary Diet was prepared, and I wished to demand the agreement of the classes to the adoption of a representative constitution in accordance with my declarations already made in the year 1846. However, before the proclamation summoning the Diet was published, the Government felt convinced that they might expect certain opposition not only from the benches of princes and counts, but also from the greater part of the commoners.

Under these circumstances I had to decide upon the summoning of a constituent assembly of Deputies, for the purpose of consulting about a new fundamental law, and signed the decisive document on the 19th of March. At the same time my Government was able to set to work to cast off the ballast of reactionary measures and laws, which were still in force. On the 26th of March the Confederate exceptional laws of the 20th of September 1819, 30th May, 28th June and the 8th of November 1834 were repealed by sovereign order. The limits were thus removed which had been fixed by the Confederacy in the single States for a lawful development of constitutional state.

The question now was, whether in this way the rebellious spirit of the times might be banished, which daily showed more threatening symptoms in the neighbouring lands.

Since the first days in March an uneasy movement and a more excited state of mind were noticeable in Coburg as well as in Gotha. The rising had already begun in the latter place on the 3rd of March. On this day the then so-called Mannheim address had found its way to the Coburg burghers. Four demands were made in this address, which, as they

touched upon the universal German and national affairs, were different from the other storms of petitions from particular corporations. At the top of these addresses, after the Mannheim model, which had spread throughout Germany, stood the striking words, 'A German Parliament.'

Besides this, they demanded the freedom of the Press, the arming of the people, and trials by jury. Several burghers of Coburg presented the magistrate of the town with the plan of a 'Petition to the Duke,' in order to promote a council concerning the same in the Public Assembly of Burghers. The plan contained, as far as concerned me personally, the most universal assurances of fidelity and adherence, but were, on the whole, so characteristic of the state of things and the public mind, that one would receive but an incomplete idea, if one attempted to depict the year 1848 without quoting the remarkable bombast which at that time ruled the world.

During the time when addresses were all the rage, a remarkable kind of dialogue had developed between princes and their peoples, of which my loyal Coburgers also sent me a finely modelled example on the 6th of March.

'Concord between Prince and people, unity of all Germany, is now the cry which rises from all the well intentioned men of the Fatherland, of the German Press and the German Confederacy. If this cry is to find an echo in the German people, as find it it must, the Press must be free, the German Confederacy must be national. But the Confederacy is only national when it is an organ of the efforts of all Germany to bring about an intrinsic unity, when it is, in the full sense of the word, a representative of the German people, as well as of the German Princes. Only under these conditions will an armament of the people fulfil its aim, that of preserving peace in the interior and securing against anything exterior.

'Most Gracious Duke, most honoured Prince! if it were only a question of the preservation of concord, between Your Highness and your people, really! everything would be well with us. Your Highness has, through your noble reign, earned the thanks of your whole country. The strongest link is that which binds all those belonging to the land, particularly the Coburg Representative Assembly, to Your Highness. But it is now a question of the highest and most noble possession

of a great nation—the national existence of the Fatherland, that the whole German people may stand facing a common foe together, like one man, can only be reached through the fulfilment of the long cherished wish and the just demands of all races of Germany and national institutions—a fulfilment which also lies in the hand of Your Highness as a member of the Confederacy.

'We therefore lay this most humble declaration with confidence before our Most Gracious Duke and Sovereign, that during the next few days we shall unite in all the petitions for freedom of the Press, representation of the people in the German Confederacy, armament of the people and trials by jury which come to our knowledge in all parts of Germany, being convinced that the Fatherland can be secured from outside dangers, and rejuvenated internally by means of the adoption of these institutions.

'In consideration of the present pressing state of affairs we think, however, that it will greatly help to reassure the country if the Assemblies stand by our Most Gracious Prince. We therefore most humbly beg Your Highness most graciously, to order the immediate breaking up of the Representative Assembly.'

My reply to this address followed on the 10th of March in the form of a proclamation:

'Burghers of my residence of Coburg! The address of the 6th of this month sent me by you affords me the welcome opportunity of expressing to you my most entire satisfaction at the quiet and lawful behaviour which you have shown during these days of universal political excitement. For the sentiments of true attachment which you expressed therein receive my warmest thanks. All this must indeed be an unerring good sign of the promised concord.

'To strengthen this concord between me and my people more and more shall be the object of my most earnest endeavours. The confidence with which you have as freely and openly expressed your wishes, as I like you to do, does my heart good, as far as in me lies to justify it. I have decided to assemble the representatives of my Duchy of Coburg on the 2nd of next month, in order to deliberate with them as to what, in this serious moment, the interests of the

country demand with regard to the interests of all united Germany.

'Meanwhile I shall have prepared a law to lay before them respecting the adoption of complete freedom of the Press. The latter entirely agrees with my principles, and I will gladly warrant it. A plan for a law respecting the alteration of section 79 of Magna Charta will also be proposed to them, so that the right of petition and the right of the people's assembly may be freely carried out. I have already long since recognised the superiority of openness and publicity in the administration of justice by means of trials by jury, and the necessary preparatory measures for the adoption of this mode of administration were already ordered by me during the last year. My Duchy of Coburg shall also share in this constitution corresponding with the times.

'I will very gladly lend a helping hand to the adoption of the armament system, which lightens the burden of the standing armies of the Confederate States and affords the necessary defence for the safety of the Confederacy. I shall hold a consultation with regard to this with the allied German Princes. Until then, wherever it would be possible to establish the universal arming of the people, I should gladly allow a guard of burghers in the towns. A proposed law for the taking of the oath by the military on the constitution will be laid before the Assembly.

'As a man of German sentiments and filled with the warmest love for the Fatherland, I most willingly joined the Confederate Princes, who recognise the representation of the German nation in the Confederacy to be the most effective means of strengthening Germany and furthering her common interests. I have already instructed my envoys to the Confederate Diet to support the proposal of a universal German Parliament as strongly as possible.

'Burghers of Coburg! may these declarations furnish you with a proof of my great willingness to fulfil wishes which accord with the real wants of the times. Stand by me further with tried faithfulness, that we may maintain public quiet and order in these uneasy times. I confidingly place them under your protection.

'BRÖHMER.' 'ERNEST.'

As may be seen, the movement had, as yet, in the beginning, been made entirely and universally in a German patriotic direction, and I can say with truth that it had my sympathy from the first.

Whilst, during the first days in March this—one might say ideal—trait was still uppermost, influences of an entirely different kind, nevertheless, soon made themselves apparent in the small Thuringian States, and antimonarchic, socialistic and anarchic tendencies came to the surface. Numerous assemblies of the people were held, petitions and resolutions poured in from all sides; one found one's self suddenly in the midst of aimless proceedings, which one might only hope would be but transitory, and that it would be counterbalanced by the association of the representatives of the country.

Doubtful matters soon came to light: release from all feudal burdens as regarded all rights of pasture, the setting aside of all difference of classes, and the right to inherit the position of representative of the country, the incorporation of the crown-land revenues with the public property, the appointment of 'national men' to all State offices, the establishment of publicity throughout the administration, the assurance of a supply of wood for the wants of the people, release from the excise on materials for consumption, the abatement of toll-moneys, abolishment of rights of the chase, etc.

The first blast of the furious hurricane of political senselessness sometimes struck me as being rather comical, and I was impressed by this when I wrote as follows to King Leopold on the 15th of March:—

'In Coburg they also quite violently demanded everything of the Government—even health and long life—all that a mortal can possibly ask for, amongst other things, "Freedom of speech." The quietly disposed are invisible as well in political life as in the field of the Press.'

That the intervening events in the larger German States particularly in Prussia and Saxony, as well as in Austria materially increased the political disorder and the disturbing tendencies in the Thuringian countries also, was to be expected and a few weeks later I found it necessary to characterise the movement as more serious and critical. What I wrote at that time to my uncle in Brussels concerning it I still consider

to be for the most part an exact description, and therefore think it right to repeat it here:

'We are going through a frightful period. Internal and external storms have destroyed the organism of all German states, respect for the law has disappeared, and the power of the masses alone makes itself felt. The Governments must submit to a state of things which borders on the scandalous. I have not the smallest hope, either, as the universal confidence in any form of Government is entirely gone, and complete discouragement reigns on the one hand and universal licence on the other.

'We have had no universal revolution as regards general principles and tendencies; such a state of things would have given rise to something certain; but in every little territory, in every little town, in every village we have suffered from a peculiar disturbance which usually has divers grounds, and is therefore followed by different consequences. Only one result has been the same everywhere, that complete anarchy has gained the upper hand, which yet cannot be conquered everywhere, but naturally by degrees only. Business and traffic are neglected, and workmen without bread are growing more imperious day by day. Added to this, the want of money is so frightful that we shall all have reached States' bankruptcy in a few months. Railway companies and small and large bankers are already discontinuing payment. All those who, three weeks ago, through fear of a reaction, hindered the Government with impertinent violence, from maintaining lawful order and using its power, are showing their brutality, and demand that we shall support anarchy, now that our power is void, but obedience is no longer shown.'

If, at the close of this letter, I was still in a position to say, 'I am still able to do much, as implicit confidence is reposed in me'—I did indeed find opportunities enough during the next few weeks to do a great deal in my own person for order and law. In almost every place unpopular persons and officials were badly handled.

Amongst the latter Chief Commissary of police Eberhardt was universally disliked, and it became unavoidably necessary to remove him. It was the same with States Councillor Hess

who even during the first days of the movement fell a victim to the popular excitement. He was accused of being inimical to the constitution, and I had to release him from service for a time.

The miserable system of proscribing the officials by means of the Press came more and more into fashion, and I was called upon numberless times to protect my own officials. In Coburg as well as in Gotha serious disturbances had occurred since the beginning of April. In Gotha many attempts had been made on the loan-offices; the workmen demanded increased wages and showed intentions of obtaining their demands by means of force; even the prison was stormed. I was forced to have cartridges dealt out to 400 men of the Gotha battalion, and the Citizens' Guard had to remain under arms during the night of the 16th April.

One of the worst features of the revolutionary year was the attempts to undermine the discipline of the troops, nor were we in Thuringia to be spared this evil. People interfered in matters of military justice, they set the men against the officers. In Coburg, events of this kind had already become so serious in April, that I was forced to adopt stern measures. As the people had taken part with the soldiers against several officers, I summoned the members of the magistracy and the board of aldermen, as well as the captains of the militia to the Castle on the 21st of April, and declared my point of view to them with the greatest decision. I gave the court-martial alone the right to judge the accused, and said plainly that military matters were not to be measured according to the views of civilians.

I went down into the courtyard of the castle amongst the assembled officials, and successfully showed them how I must act in order to accomplish the aim of the inquiry, whether a condemning or absolving judgment was passed or not. 'As I have always followed the rules marked out by the law,' I added in a louder tone, 'I shall now perform the duties demanded by my position. I hope that the civilians present are of my opinion, that law and order must prevail. I have no further warning or request to make.'

One could nevertheless see that a personal grasp was not wanting in effect, but one would have had to be omnipresent

to successfully oppose the attempts against social and political order. I remember a most amusing passage characteristic of the time, which happened in the month of May, when, during one of my many small trips between Coburg and Gotha, I one day met a carriage, coming down from the Thuringian to the Henneberg forest, whose occupants I at once recognised as officials belonging to the departments, Justice, Finance and Forest in Cella St Blasii.

They were in a most excited state, and told me that they were escaping to Gotha. They had been driven from Cella St Blasii by the revolution, and were going to seek the protection of the Government. The workmen belonging to the gum manufactory of the place had united with the rabble and threatened the lives of the officials. Their wishes and demands had been so tumultuously uttered that nothing remained but to hasten from the fearful place. These gentlemen were in so despairing a moral condition that my first idea of at once conducting them back personally to the spot could not be carried out.

I therefore drove into the little town alone, and alighted at a public house which stood near the market place. Several hundred people had assembled in the public square and impromptu speeches were made.

I made the half-drunken innkeeper, who had recognised me, open a kind of dancing-room, and took possession of a parish clerk who happened to be there, and who seemed to suit, in order to make out a protocol.

Meantime, the news of my arrival had spread, and I did not hesitate to have it made known through the landlord and a forest overseer, who had made his appearance, that I was prepared personally to hear their complaints and grievances. The magistrate of the town, as well as the better class burghers and manufacturers were nowhere to be found, and had either hidden themselves, or, like my officials, had departed. The room in which I had stationed myself soon filled with a motley crowd of factory hands, woodcutters and lower class burghers, who surrounded me with much noise. I demanded a regularly chosen deputation in order to obtain information concerning the state of affairs, and to settle the same. This was received with approbation, and the crowd

left the room; after the lapse of an hour, during which it had been very lively in the square, a deputation of about fifty persons appeared, who in most unparliamentary form laid before me a number of complaints against the officials.

I now attempted to make the men understand that it was impossible to attain any end in these matters by using force with the officials, and that it would therefore be necessary to send a deputation to the Ministry in Gotha, in order to have the wishes of the people granted. But meantime it would be taken for granted that the officials would be allowed to return quietly to Cella, as I could not allow them to be hindered in the performance of their duty by threats and expressions of violence. Although this was admitted after some opposition, yet no one was prepared to guarantee the protection and safety of the officials, and I was obliged to remind them that in this case a company of soldiers would have to be quartered in the place, to remain there some time, and whose maintenance would have to be borne by the inhabitants of Cella. The so-called deputation now said that they would ask instructions of their party, and they then left the room again, to return only after the lapse of another half hour.

My question whether the assembled citizens of the town were willing to answer for the protection of the officials was, it is true, answered in the affirmative; but because of the great excitement and the many strangers who, it was pretended, were at that time staying there, they would give no guarantee. In order to put an end to the matter, I turned to several of the men who stood nearest to me, praised their good sentiments and intentions, and persuaded them to sign a short protocol in which they bound themselves to answer for the safety of the officials whenever they returned to Cella. Thirty persons at length signed it.

Other citizens belonging to the better classes soon dropped in, and a kind of society for the protection of officials and maintenance of order was formed. Meanwhile I sent a servant to Gotha to fetch the escaped officials, and in a few days they resumed their posts. The grievances of the people of Cella once set down on paper melted down to a very small number, and were redressed by the Government. In the following year I had the satisfaction of seeing that when two

of the officials there were to be promoted, the community sent a request to the Government not to tear these valued and beloved men from the scene of their beneficent activity.*

The existing state of affairs had, as it were, forced me to try an only too personal rule amidst the most extravagant projects of liberty, and when I wrote to my brother from Gotha so early as the 20th of March: 'My house is like a headquarters, whence all orders must be issued personally,' I did not think that this uncomfortable and disquieting state of things would go on for weeks and months to come. Such were the contradictions furnished by this extraordinary time.

Whilst the people were rising against the Princes everywhere, the most immediate and personal activity, and often enough the most impossible things were expected of them. Whilst all power and even their possessions were being disputed and cavilled at, they were to protect the property of their subjects and care for their acquired rights. 'How am I to find words,' I wrote to my brother, 'in which to describe my feelings? Were I a private citizen, I should perhaps rejoice with them. But in my position, with all the duties which my calling imposes upon me, recognising the hopelessness of the present condition of affairs, I can only see the precipice yawning before and behind me.—It is enough to make one lose one's reason.

'My decision is the same which I would follow as a soldier in battle: to endure until the end, true to my duty, true to my people through all coming storms. The beautiful days of the past lie like an expiring life, like an exquisite dream behind me, after all that we have experienced and gone through during the past four weeks, and I thank Providence for not having given me any children, for I should tremble for them. I will not give way to my feelings any longer, but which of us German Princes will think otherwise, feel otherwise?'.

It was still more significant of my opinion of the existing condition of things when, a few days later, I said, describing the state of Germany: 'We Princes are very wavering, as we

* Concerning the occurrence in Cella, Herr von Stein wrote to me: 'The Regent's personal power is, thank God, still very effective amongst the people, even the most excited. Your Highness's clear, firm and immediate adjudication has certainly done more than it would have been possible to accomplish by means of a whole regiment. Bailiff Regel was quite struck by the good effect produced.

have too little intelligence, courage and understanding of the spirit of the times.'

Meanwhile the Assembly of Representatives had been opened in Coburg as well as in Gotha. It is time now to remind the reader that in most German States the year 1848 had brought a change in the titles, and that the decrees and proclamations of the sovereign Princes were at that time designated 'By the grace of God.' I had not begun this doubtful innovation, but had willingly adopted it, without expecting that this matter of form also would shortly be turned into an important reason for the reaction in Germany.

Little weight as I should like to lay upon the fact that the 'Grace of God,' adopted by the duodecimo States without any pious conviction, had been rejected during the storm of 1848, yet I have never been able to understand how I should have been able to make up my mind to adopt the once rejected formula later and repentantly, after the example of many middle-sized and even the smallest of the German States.

In Coburg and Gotha the old-fashioned form of my title of sovereignty was therefore laid aside, not only during the bad times, but actually and for ever, without visibly altering the worth of the law of the country.

As now regarded the Coburg Diet, it was, as I had already promised in my proclamation to the citizens, summoned to an extra session. Bills for the points already mentioned in other places, above all for the introduction of complete freedom of the Press, the free use of the right to petition, the publicity of trials and many other things were drawn up. But during the time between the 13th of March and the 3rd of April, on which last day the assembling of the Diet took place, a good deal of agitation had arisen in the country, concerning the forest and hunting rights.

In Thuringia, as everywhere, they tried to force the population into a democratic socialistic tendency by means of questions of this kind. Under these circumstances I decided upon a step which caused no little astonishment. In the speech from the throne with which I opened the extra session of the Diet, I voluntarily expressed my views of the rights of chase on strange lands and grounds, and granted it

without demand of payment to those parishes, to whose boundaries the ground to be hunted over belonged. I only made the condition that it should not be shot over by the members of the parish, but by regular sportsmen or tenants, and the produce given to the parish funds.

Something similar had already been done by Herr von Stockmar for his property, as well as that of King Leopold in the way of private rights. I therefore thought it right to mention in the speech from the throne, that all others who had hunting rights in my Duchy would follow this example; yet this did not find much approval. A perfect war of destruction against all that runs on the ground, flies in the air and swims in the water, was at once begun in the Thuringian forest, and, by preference, on my own lands.

Besides this, I had still another proposal to make in my opening speech to the Coburg Diet, which was attended by lasting discussions and many a great political action, and which touched upon one of the most important vital questions of my two Duchies:

'Many another highly important matter,' I said at the close of my speech, 'will need most earnest consideration.

'Amongst these I reckon a desire which I have long had, and the fulfilment of which depends upon an understanding between my two territories, I mean the union of my Duchies of Coburg and Gotha by means of a common constitution.

'The immense advantages of this are too evident for a more particular summary of them to be given here, and a more favourable time than the present could hardly be found for the carrying out of this plan, when it not only appears necessary to institute a reform and a timely revision of the fundamental laws of these states, but when a representative constitution corresponding to the demands of the times is to be given to Gotha.

'Examine this project, the execution of which would be a real pleasure to me in the interests of my two territories.'

For the carrying out alone of such an energetic change, which was also so nearly related to the public law, the quiet and thoughtful co-operation of all factors concerned would have been necessary. Whilst the whole world was then considering the highest questions of national state life, and

the greatest matters were being discussed with all the greater preference in every small circle, the less the influence which could be brought to bear upon them, most men were quite unfit to consider and regulate those which were the simplest and therefore the most practical.

In the matter of the Coburg-Gotha Union, it was all the more impossible to come to a decision, as the chief councillors of both lands hindered each other in the most jealous manner, and opposed each other in provincial divisions. The efforts of several years were needed in order to manage the establishment of even an approach to a constitutional union between the two small States. The Diet which assembled in April had held itself aloof from every demand of the times and the country in this respect, and were, as it were, forced in consequence to resign in favour of a new House which was to be summoned on a more widely democratic basis of elective rights. This new extraordinary Diet was summoned by me on the 20th of September, during the most uneasy period in Germany, of which I shall speak later on in another connection. The bills which were proposed provided for the release from ground taxes, the abolition of patrimonial jurisdiction, the nature of mortgages, the adoption of a universal income tax, the carrying out of the abolition of the game laws. The proposals of the Government were often carried unanimously. But when I again attempted to prepare the way for the union of Coburg and Gotha I had no more success than before.

'If,' I said in the opening speech on the 22nd of September, 'I were to mention this plan as a wish, the fulfilment of which would be a pleasure to me in the interests of both territories, it shows itself in the light of a really unavoidable necessity, now that the want of a code as equal and as common to the State arrangements of the German territories as possible is growing more and more evident.

'You will find this, gentlemen, more nearly confirmed and carried out in the proposal which will next be laid before you.

'I think it necessary only to bring forward the fact that without this union of both lands in an organic whole, the pressingly necessary changes and simplification of the administration can be attained in but an incomplete degree; yes,

even the independence hitherto enjoyed by the land may be placed in danger.

'May you, gentlemen, as well as the representatives who are soon to be summoned together in the Duchy of Gotha, recognise the necessity of such a union, and the hindrances which may perhaps be opposed to it here and there cannot then fail to be entirely removed.'

In order to explain the events which soon after occurred with regard to this question, I must here observe that neither my Coburg nor Gotha councillors seriously and deeply shared the convictions to which I had given utterance. The remarkable state of things in the year 1848, also allowed me to deviate in a certain measure from the usual constitutional practice of presenting a purely Ministerial programme by means of the speech from the throne. What I said to the Coburg representatives with regard to the union question, were my own words in the strictest sense, and I can hardly doubt that States Councillor Bröhmer, who managed the affairs of Coburg with ministerial authority, scarcely approved of all the consequences they would bring. He did not meet me quite frankly in this desired matter, and tacked from one point to the other, in order to make Gotha out as being in fault should it not succeed.

And, in fact, the dislike for the relinquishment of the greatest particularism was not greater there than in Coburg. Whilst most senseless republican dreams, based on the abolishment of territorial and feudal institutions were ripening more and more, one noticed that the Church seemed to be the most inextirpable inheritance of the Germans, and while even modestly good and intelligent men had fallen victims to a great national madness, there was no possibility of fitly solving the simplest matter relating to the country.

This situation was strikingly shown in a letter from States' Minister von Stein, when he wrote on the 24th of October:

Even if the majority of the National Assembly express their opposition to the mediatisation of the small States, they must nevertheless be destroyed, for what is left of it by the central power will be so cut up and worn away by special law-making assemblies, that the small single government will

be unable to last out much longer. To this may be added the financial embarrassment, and they must therefore consume away. For Coburg and Gotha there is, besides, the infliction of the spirit of separation between Coburg and Gotha, which is increasing here and leading to the most unpleasant disturbances. I gained some new experiences concerning this only yesterday!'

In the above letter the eventful word mediatisation appears for the first time in my description of the year 1848, but it played a part in all the constitutional disputes of the small lands throughout the year, and also during the times which followed, of which I shall speak at length. The question laid before the Coburg Diet concerning the union of my two territories leads me to the Gotha constitutional affairs, of which I must at least mention the principal outlines.

In the earlier relations of Gotha the nobility had known how to maintain a great preponderance for themselves. Since the old times they ruled Court and State affairs so greatly that no change could have been accomplished without immediately encroaching upon the sovereign power. If the revolution was to be hindered from breaking through all bounds of order, the Government itself would have to put its hand to the work of reorganisation. I therefore considered that the time had come to take steps to restore order.

In the Court arrangements the old institution of noble gentlemen-of-the-bedchamber was abolished by a ministerial decision, and the division which separated people and Court everywhere in Germany to a serious degree, was all at once destroyed. The nobility of Gotha have never forgiven me for taking this step, but have also waited in vain for the time when their standing aloof would make me decide to follow the popular path of reaction and restoration, while efforts were being made elsewhere to forget what had taken place in 1848 as quickly as possible. The Court of Gotha had for a considerable space of time been able to get on without the 'Grace of God' as well as without gentlemen-of-the-bedchamber.

In the same way, the attempt of the nobility of Gotha to delay the settlement of the constitution was very unsuccessful, although the knightly representatives had expressed them-

selves favourably concerning the town suffrage at the Diet of Deputies in February 1848. The Government was now forced to make a provisory arrangement which in some degree swerved from the line of the constitution. An Assembly of Notables was called together, which was to be decided by universal suffrage and which would deliberate concerning a new States fundamental law. The order was explained in the following words:

'We, Ernest, etc., have willingly complied with the wish which our subjects in the Duchy of Gotha have laid before us regarding a change according to the times of the constitution of the country, and given them the assurance by means of a promulgation of the 7th inst. that equal political rights will be given them by means of a representative constitution, as are now lawfully established in our Duchy of Coburg.

'Whereas, We immediately made the necessary arrangements for the preparation of the constitutional plan, it has appeared fit to Us to assemble around Us delegates from the different orders and classes of the people of Our Duchy of Gotha, in greater numbers than the State arrangements have hitherto admitted, in order to lay the bill before them, to take counsel with them concerning this important matter which so nearly concerns the future welfare of our subjects, and to definitely establish the conditions, one by one, with their consent.

'We therefore provisorily prescribe for the composition of this Assembly of Delegates, the conditions of being entitled to vote and eligibility with participation in the Assembly, and as regards the form of votes in the separate classes themselves, with regard to the determinations concerning the same contained in the constitutional laws of Our Duchy of Coburg, etc.'

After the order of vote proposed and expected by me, the relations of the town and country, delegated to those belonging to the nobility, was materially improved for the former, yet there were many disputes, protests and discussions before the votes were settled. At length, apart from the *votum virile* of the Princes Hohenlohe, which was retained for them as lords of the Earldom of Obergleichen, one representative was sent by the Town Councillor of Gotha, five in all by the citizens of the towns of Ohrdruff, Waltershausen, and Gotha

five by the nobility and twelve by the official towns of Flecken and Dörfer, to this Extraordinary States Assembly which was summoned together on the 18th of June. I had the intention of opening the new Assembly of popular representatives with the same solemnity usual in the Diet. To my great amusement I received a letter apparently sent from the representative circles, in which I was informed that a better impression would be made if I avoided all military and princely pomp. I therefore gave the gentlemen to understand that if the forms hitherto observed did not please them, I would gladly appear in hunting costume. This little joke brought them to their senses, and I opened the Assembly in the usual manner with the following words:

'Gentlemen! I bid you heartily welcome! A few years ago I stood in this same spot and frankly announced with pleasure to the members of the old provincial diet that it was my desire and intention to supply the wants of the times, and, whenever the opportunity offered itself, to thoroughly reform the constitution of the country. The more approbation this promise received, and the more the universal desire for a representative rule according to the times was made known to me, the more eager I was to fulfil this desire.

'But internal and external hindrances imperiously opposed my purpose, and I soon recognised the fact that time alone could overcome them. My views were confirmed, and that of which one formerly hardly dared to think, has already become a reality. A renewed lease of life has come to our Fatherland: I joyfully join myself to it. The goal of my efforts is the realisation of freedom and the welfare of the one, as of the whole. May all my faithful subjects endeavour with decision and truth, yet with a perfect comprehension of the real truth, to reach this goal with me.

'This goal lay pleasantly before my eyes at the drawing up of the States' fundamental law, the sketch of which will now be laid before you, and which has been founded on the basis of extensive participation for the citizens of the State in public matters and on a safe guarantee of the rights of the people.

'I address myself confidently to you, gentlemen, asking for your unbiassed consideration of the following matters. When I summoned you together after the provisory arrangement

for the election made by means of the order of the 19th of March, which formerly appeared sufficient for the convenience as well as the demands of the time, it was not to be imagined that time would go more quickly than the election, in consequence of which I see you assembled here before me.

'The judicial view of the present with regard to election and the share begun to be taken by the people in the legislature, the matters relating to the community and to political economy, is now altered. The only right recognised as belonging to such an assembly is the right to represent the will of the people, for which deputies have been chosen from the people according to the principle of a similar right, principles which are contained in the bill for the constitutional law and the order of election.

'I hope, gentlemen, that you have not misunderstood me, and that, as regards the business mentioned you will limit your consultations to the "order of election" and the enclosed paragraphs of the bill, in order to form, in co-operation with the States' Government, a lawful foundation by means of which a new election may be arranged and a more suitable organ of the people's will be called into life, which will examine and settle the remaining portions of the constitutional law in co-operation with the States' Government, concerning which I expect that a more close union of the now so widely divided parts of the Duchies of Coburg and Gotha will be recognised as being useful to the whole.'

My speech, which was intended to be the freest possible expression of my convictions, and was therefore not strictly after the model of similar enunciations, was calculated to prevent the Assembly from setting to work in a wrong manner. The time at which the notables of the country had assembled had already shown such strong symptoms of the universal cessation of a lawful state of things, that one could not but fear that the chamber should be transformed into a kind of miniature legislature and render every peaceful and legal restoration of a new constitution very difficult. Meanwhile the elements which were brought together were of the best kind, and I may say that my conciliatory and decisive attitude had disarmed even the radicals amongst them. The Assembly complied with my desire, and only that portion of

the universal bill for the fundamental law was taken into consideration which related to election and the order of voting. Most of the decisions were almost entirely conformable to the proposals made by the Government, and thus the order of election to the Diet for the Duchy of Gotha was accepted and established in four sittings.

This shortest of the many preliminary parliaments, of the year 1848 we were able to break up as early as the 23rd of June. The new law was based on the system of universal but indireet election, with the exemption of all representative membership, and with the approximate calculation of five hundred men born in the State to one deputy. According to this the Diet of the Duchy consisted of twenty members. As early as the 28th of June the publication of the new law of election followed, on the basis of which a regular Diet was summoned on the 2nd of October.

There were many restless and radical elements chosen for this chamber, and the Government possessed no very energetic representative in the person of States Minister von Stein. In Austria and Prussia they had at length succeeded in assigning a limit to the anarchic movement; in the small States on the contrary, the revolutionary spirit appeared to think itself all the more sure, and now really began to spread. Under these circumstances the negotiations concerning the proposals for the constitution appeared as if they would never come to an end, and the Deputies were difficult to manage.

The tasks which were set the Diet were, it is true, of a very comprehensive nature. At the final settlement of the Constitutional Bill brought forward for consideration, the conclusions had to be taken into consideration, which had meantime been come to by the National Assembly, with regard to the particular rights of the German States. Many of them laid greater restrictions on the constitutional rights of the single States than had been expected; in other points the questions of the balance, between the kingdoms and the single States, as well as the States amongst themselves, could still be kept equal.

Apart also from these difficulties, the bill for the Gotha fundamental law extended to over a hundred paragraphs, the conscientious and thorough consideration of which would

have occupied many months, even in quieter times. Besides this, a law for the alteration of the charges on the proprietory and the seigneurial rights had to be accomplished, to which were added bills for the cessation of the rights of hunting and shooting on strange land and ground, as well as an executive order concerning it. The Diet also had a tax-reform bill to consider. The Government hoped to find a means of lessening the charges in the poorer division of those belonging to the State towards the burden of State expenses in the universal income-tax.

Finally, I had a new organisation of military duties in view. At that time it was hoped that a system of universal national defence might be instituted by means of an arrangement with the neighbouring States, and a reservation of the permission of the central power, whereby, by means of the greatest extension of service duty, the weary burdens would be decreased, and a strengthening of the combative force brought about without too great an increase of expenditure.

Great as was the programme of work which was thus presented to the newly reformed Diet, the less I was able to conceal the fact that the principal task assigned it was to be found in the alteration relating to the public law of the relations between Coburg and Gotha. I therefore laid some weight on this point in my opening speech to the Gotha Diet, as I had when mentioning my views concerning the same point in Coburg.

'The execution alone,'—were my closing words—'of all these plans, as well as principally the thriving success of my efforts so honestly made in behalf of the welfare of this country, is by preference conditional on a union of the former with the Duchy of Coburg in a common constitution.

'Already at the opening of the last Diet I pointed out the usefulness of such a measure, now that the want of as equal a legislature and as common a state arrangement as possible in the different lands of Germany is becoming more and more evident, when the idea of a single united Fatherland is making practical demands, particularly in the smaller constituent parts of the same, now that these demands may possibly form one condition of the continuance of the existence of the

latter, nor does this union indeed appear in the light of an unavoidable necessity.

'It is with these feelings that I have laid before you the bill for the fundamental law which I also proposed to the Diet opened in Coburg on the 22nd of last month as the basis of political equality of both divisions of the country. I allow myself to hope that you, as well as the representatives in Coburg, will recognise with me the necessity of such an equality, and the greatest possible community in the organs of government, and that you will regard the attainment of this object adopted by me, and at the same time pointed out to you, as one of the nearest as well as the principal fields for your activity.'

It is not my intention to weary the reader with the details of the transactions of the Diet, which lasted until March of the year 1849. That a list of determinations in the States' fundamental law was now laid before my Government by the Deputies which unmistakeably bore the signature of the year 1848, was not to be mistaken for a moment. But the time was hardly suitable for a constitutional conflict in a small land; the unsuitable form of many a constitutional paragraph was also to be laid to the account of the part compliance of Minister von Stein.

According to this constitution a mere prohibitive veto on the decisions of the Chamber was left to the sovereign prince. The granting and refusal of taxes was to be the right of the representatives alone. The confiscation of the domain to the expenses of State struck the sovereign and the rights of my House a still harder blow.

I nevertheless confirmed the so often altered statute, with the expectation that the representatives themselves would find a remedy for this want in a perfectly lawful way. As regarded the crown-lands' question, it had been turned in a wrong direction more through the Minister than the Deputies themselves. A protest had immediately been raised by my brother and my two uncles, Leopold and Ferdinand, against the constitutional decrees which limited the rights of the Regent, and which preserved the domain question for me personally at that time, but in later years for all agnates, their rights with regard to the decisions of the Diet.

On this point my brother was decided in his intention to appear in the defence of justice against the conditions of the new constitution, and grew very angry and bitter against me in his letters, which by no means lightened my task.

It is almost impossible to describe the violence with which people at that time attempted to solve involved questions of property. The representatives assembled at the Diet, started with the conclusion that all princely income, even dwellings and castles were to be declared the property of the State. Amongst these there was much which came from the allodial possessions of my mother, and it would have been a very exhausting task to *search* through the different titles of possession by means of deeds. This was very convenient for the revolutionary time, as a conclusion could simply be arrived at. In section 14 of the new constitution the free use at least of a number of castles and court buildings particularly mentioned by name was allowed. I had great trouble in obtaining the right of disposal over the Court theatre, which was solely a princely creation. To this end I was obliged to sacrifice other advantages, as, for example, the right to use the castle at Tenneberg, etc.

But I had, on the whole, the satisfaction of knowing that the States' fundamental law could be regarded as a work which was made to last, and which would not need to be overthrown in a short time, as has happened to so many other constitutions of the year 1848. This result was only attained, however, through the fact that even in the worst months of the year 1848 I never ceased to exercise a certain purely personal authority, by means of which I was able to keep the more moderate elements above the surface, and to decisively repulse the republican and anarchic efforts which had spread only too universally throughout the other Thuringian lands.

My position in Coburg and Gotha remained so unalterably secure during the unpleasant year, that I myself was able in some particulars to work for the universal welfare of the Saxon Duchies, with some degree of consideration and success. In the eastern portion of Thuringia, there had been an increasing movement since the beginning of July, which had arisen in the Saxon manufacturing districts, and which the

governments were in no wise a match for. All business had been stopped in Altenburg, particularly through the dangerous influence of a few talented republicans, who, however, were not particular as to the means they employed. The poorer classes had been excited by means of the most impossible promises. In the Assembly, Minister von Planitz, had not attempted to put a stop to the wildest proposals for procuring money to support starving workmen.

As the financial impossibillity of such plans could not be doubted, the artfully generated excitement of the people increased more and more. The Duke and the entire Court were accused of hindering the friendly intentions which the radical entertained for the people, and it was supposed that the reactionary party wished to call out the Royal Saxon troops in order to suppress the boasted acquisitions and freedom of the people. Revolutionary bands surrounded the castle in which the entire ducal family were, as it were, held imprisoned. People said everywhere that it was a certain fact that the Duke would in a few days be forced to abdicate, and the Republic would immediately be proclaimed in Altenburg. There was indeed a universal ferment and blustering. The democratic republican unions had spread all through Thuringia, and were closely bound together. In Jena a central union had been formed under the presidency of the communistically-minded Dr Lafaurie, which began an open agitation for the abolition of the Thuringian Duchies. They hoped to get through with the small Princes of these lands most quickly; after they were driven away, they had the intention of founding a United Thuringian Republic which, secured in the very heart of Germany, would be a point of issue for further democratic conquests. Disturbances had been intentionally raised at the same time in the bordering princedoms, in Gem and in Rudolstadt. In the former a very serious meeting of soldiers had moreover taken place on the 5th of July. The troops formally revolted under pretence of not wanting the Articles of War read to them, and the calling out of the Saxon military was quite unavoidable.

All these disturbances had a double meaning; they were dangerous in themselves for the Thuringian Duchies, but they had a deeper reason with regard to the universal political

tendency towards mediatising of the small States. In the Frankfort National Assembly, the question whether a union of all Saxon territories was not to be striven for in the interests of Germany was the order of the day. The union of the Thuringian States under the sovereignty of Weimar was equally seriously considered. The more untenable the smaller Governments showed themselves in opposition to the republican measures, the more reason the central power had for insisting on mediatisation, and one of the most interesting episodes of the year, which has been almost entirely forgotten, and which may be seen by following the councils and negotiations, is that which now aimed at founding a Thuringian Corporative State, then at the union of the Ducal Saxon territories with the Kingdom of Saxony.

Events such as had taken place in Altenburg were almost desired for these half and whole tendencies to mediatise. In order to gain information concerning the predominant feeling in Weimar I hastened thither and conferred with the Ministers there. They complained greatly of the dangerous condition of the Thuringian States, and for the sake of the safety of the Archduchy itself were by no means inclined to relinquish the idea of the united Thuringian House. Concerning the state of things in Altenburg most incredible things were related, and they asserted decisively that the Ducal Family were in the greatest danger. No one could vouch for a few days more of life for the unfortunate Prince.

Alarmed to the utmost by the news which I had received, I made up my mind to go at once to Altenburg. Accompanied by my secretary, afterwards States Councillor Brückner, I took my place like any ordinary traveller in a second-class railway carriage, and arrived almost unrecognised in Altenburg. My companion and I then went to a hotel which stood near the station, where we had an opportunity during dinner of making inquiries of the landlord as to what had occurred, and how things were there. The landlord assured us, with an appearance of the deepest conviction, that the people of Altenburg were on the eve of the greatest event: it was quite true and correct that the Duke was imprisoned and cut off from everyone. To the question: By whom? the man answered with the pathos of a schoolmaster, who has just

described the terrors of the French Revolution and the sufferings of the prisoners: 'He is in the power of the Provisory Government, and is watched by the citizens' guard.'

'Would it be impossible to get into the Ducal palace?'

'Quite impossible,' answered the landlord without hesitation; and I asked still more inquisitively about Court Marshal von Minckwitz, as I had intended to visit him, he assured me with great confidence that it would also be quite impossible, for then von Minckwitz also was being guarded in his house.

I was so astonished and provoked by all this, that it made me all the more eager to carry out my intention at any price. In spite of Brückner's dissuasions I went to the Court Marshal's house, where a militiaman of not too imposing a military appearance, and, if I am not mistaken, armed with an old halbard, rather good-naturedly refused me entrance, in the Altenburg dialect. I cannot now say how it happened, but with a tolerably gentle push I thrust the man aside and went unhindered into the house. When I appeared before Minckwitz he seemed to be greatly startled and anxiously inquired what I wanted, and how I had managed to come in.

'I desire nothing more than that you shall at once conduct me to the Duke,' was my short answer, which caused the Court Marshal to pour out a flood of excuses and descriptions from which nothing was after all to be gathered except that everyone in the place had lost their minds. As Herr von Minckwitz refused, as he expressed it, to 'go to meet certain death' with me, nothing remained except for me to try my luck alone.

The drive up to the high castle of Altenburg led around the next street corner through a closed barricade, and the guard had orders to let no one in or out. At the moment I reached it, it fortunately happened that an officer belonging to the militia came up to change the guard. I immediately addressed myself to him and told him who I was and that I wished to speak to the Duke. My very friendly words and the quite extraordinary and by no means foreseen fact that a neighbouring Prince had unexpectedly come on a visit to the Duke, may have greatly shaken the good Altenburger citizen in his revolutionary character. I thought it worth while to employ

a little cunning which would in any case prevent the so-called provisory government from playing me any bad trick. Taking it for granted that the officer of the citizens' guard would not fail to inform his authorities concerning everything which had happened and been said, I remarked casually that an active column of troops were in the neighbourhood of the town and that they would certainly march in if I did not soon return.

After all these negotiations I at length got into the castle, and thought I had conquered all the chief difficulties. But I was mistaken in this, for my worst experiences were to be made with the Duke himself. The moral state in which I found Joseph himself, as well as his long since ailing consort and the unfortunate daughters, is hardly to be described. Wavering between yielding and hopelessness, it appeared almost impossible at first to hold a quiet discussion with the Duke. Some time passed before the whole state of affairs at length became clear to me.

Amongst the Duke's officials, Government President Herr von Seckendorf was particularly hated by the revolutionary party. He was more fitted for anything than for a business man. He was known as an author of polite literature, under the name of Isidorus Orientalis, and evidently in good favour with the ladies of the Court. The Duke, however, had but small support from him, for when the tumult began, the Government President crept into every corner he could find and left everything to a countryman, Dr Krutziger, before whose pompous speeches and freezing presence the entire Government had struck sail. After the movement which took place in June, the Duke was forced to decide upon appointing him as third Minister, and on the 21st of June he assumed the duties of one.

He was, so to speak, the proxy of the popular party in the Cabinet, but the Duke tried to keep him as far as possible from his person. As he had meantime succeeded a few days after my visit to Altenburg in overthrowing his former colleagues and had taken the power into his own hands, he assumed the part of a statesman from amongst his rich repertoire, showed himself tolerably moderate, and was afterwards by no means a bad German Minister.

As things stood, it became at once clear to me that the

people's man must first of all be sent for, and that the Duke must establish nearer and better relations with him. At any rate, one would be able to learn from Herr Krutziger what 'the people's will' was, and what end was to be attained by means of the incomprehensible revolutionary measures. But the Duke would not hear of such a proposal; throughout his whole family the thought that Herr Krutziger might enjoy the honours of a Minister and be brought to Court, was regarded as the height of conceivable misfortune. Only after a long argument on my part was it at length decided to summon Krutziger and negotiate with him.

At first, however, he was not willing to enter into personal negotiations and take the consequences upon himself. At length he appeared, accompanied by friends and representatives of republican societies and a great debate began, in which the people at first made their demands in a very stormy manner, but soon became more modest when they saw that I in no way allowed myself to be intimidated. Sometimes I was forced to employ drastic means in order to bring them to reason, and described the horrors of the Confederate execution, by which they would in all probability very soon be overtaken. I did not find the inclination of the gentlemen very great, on the whole, for a battle with firearms.

My Minister, von Stein, to whom the affair was related a few days afterwards in Gotha, by States Councillor Brückner, afterwards wrote to me in Coburg, on the 15th of July, characteristically enough of the situation: 'Brückner's relation interested and pleased me in the highest degree. According to that Your Highness must have completely conquered Krutziger, and basted him like a roast during the discussion.'

The interference which I undertook to make really made it necessary for the Duke, even with a heavy heart, to sign a kind of capitulation. A few days afterwards President von Seckendorf obtained his dismission, on the excuse of 'shattered health.'

As regarded the neutral questions, in the conference which the Duke and I held with Ministers von Planitz and John, and afterwards with Krutziger also, a protocol was established in consequence of which the Altenburg Government denied any intention of abdicating in favour of the King of Saxony. If

the disturbances in Altenburg lasted, I undertook in the interests of the agnates to interpellate the Confederate central power and demand execution. On the other hand, the motion for formation of a united Thuringian State was to be taken into consideration by the Altenburg Government, only in so far as it was thought right by all sides to work for a closer union of the Thuringian States, in respect of the unprejudiced administration of the rights of the Kingdom and the Central Power.

The principal thing now was that the Duke was released from a very frightful position, and that the continuance of the Princedom in Altenburg remained assured. The local relations became so much better during the following weeks that the constitutional unions were once more able to raise their heads. The quickly raised lion of the day himself, Herr Krutziger, found it also wiser to look back a little. When, a few days after the great interference I drove through the once more peaceably open gates of Altenburg Castle, the entire population was astir. Herr Krutziger still, it is true, in the costume of a people's man, made the most obliging speeches, and even if not in a white cravat, yet did the honours at my departure as well as an important Court official.

Although the republican element in the Thuringian lands had but little promise of gaining the upper hand, yet wild proceedings, such as I had just experienced in Altenburg, could not fail to make a terrifying impression on outsiders. The Royal Government in Frankfort therefore conceived the plan of maintaining quiet and safety in the smaller States by means of Confederate troops. The War Office ordered two or three army corps to be put in motion, of which one was to be stationed in the Thuringian territories. It was difficult to believe that no afterthought was entertained with regard to this, which related to the mediatising tendencies of St Paul's Church. There was, in my opinion, no real danger to order and quiet in the Thuringian States.

Energy was entirely wanting in the republican conventicles which were springing up on all sides, and a little courage on the part of the smaller Governments should have been plainly shown in order to break the neck of the mad performances.

In reality it was only the bloodthirsty speeches of the leaders and the exciting articles in the radical papers which gave these lands the appearance of being in full revolution. It is indeed difficult to imagine to what a degree the entire Press in Germany had at that time everywhere exceeded the limits allowed for free discussion concerning the form of State to be established, and how impossible it was to expect any just treatment in matters of the Press. Added to this, all the different parties strove to excel each other as it were in violent and exciting assertions and phrases; it was as if the political disorganisation had brought with it a complete alienation of refinement and good taste.

One could hardly take up a newspaper without reading the most ridiculous nonsense, painted in the colours of the party to which it belonged. Papers of all opinions were almost without exception pretty equal in this respect. I once read in the otherwise well-edited, and really well-meaning Coburg paper, which had also come into existence during the March days, the following amusing paragraph against the October Revolution: 'Dishonour and shame on the enemies of the Fatherland, who wish to sow the seed of Princes teeth in the uprooted fields of time, without reflecting that this Cadmus seed must itself generate throttling despots.' The small Republican papers were all edited by an uneducated class of men, who, in the coarsest language and roughest manner, daily made the most insane demands for and incitements to a civil war.

That the governments were unable to obtain the mastery over these wretched publications was a fact which was, however, by no means limited to the small States. In the latter, however, it was to be inferred that they were unable to maintain themselves, and as in Frankfort, the members of the more serious circles of my Thuringian home mooted the question of their suppression. It may be imagined that the most different opinions were entertained concerning the manner, in which the small States were to be 'absorbed' by the larger ones.

Historical reminiscences of the most remote centuries were brought forward, in order to prove by document that there had been a false establishment of unity. Now the community

of race of the Thuringians was to be adopted as the basis of a new formation, then the idea of old Saxony under the Emperor Otto, again the dynastic joint suitableness of the whole Wettinic House.

I thoroughly explained my view of this matter to my brother on the 19th of July, and kept it unchanged through all disorders. At that moment the Weimar project was the first on the list, against which my objections were directed, and which cannot fail to be of some general historical interest:

'In our immediate neighbourhood also things are happening which make me very uneasy, and against which I try to work with all my might. Weimar, which has long entertained the thought of getting out of a situation by means of a *coup d'état*, which must by degrees become very destructive, has plainly shown her colours, and, upholding the monstrous state of affairs in Altenburg, regards the union of the united Thuringian States, namely that of the Grand-Duchy and the three Duchies of Saxony, all Reusz and the two Schwarzburgs in a whole, under the rule of the Weimar Regency as an unavoidable necessity, for the unity of Germany, then particularly for the welfare of the lands concerned. Both reasons are founded on false premises and the whole plan is sophism.

'I will not dispute the matter here, as it is evidently all the same to Germany if there are to be other sovereignties, whether they contain other States which number one or five hundred thousand souls; the single small States would be more willingly and advantageously absorbed by Germany, as a great whole, than by Weimar. It is really nonsensical in a moment when things are being so arranged in Frankfort in order to undertake rapid and therefore important changes of the kind, and especially against the will of the subjects. I could give a number of reasons against it besides, but I consider it unnecessary, as I should look upon the whole matter as less important if Weimar had not already secretly taken steps behind our backs which now render a quick settlement all the more necessary.

'Weimar first attempted to make an agreement with Altenburg according to which the whole of the latter with its rights of sovereignty was to go over to Weimar. Greatly as this negotiation would have defied all laws of order of suc-

cession, this might easily have been accomplished, as the Duke of Altenburg can no longer reign after all that has occurred and is occurring, and is inclined to retire personally as soon as possible. He has even opened negotiations with the King of Saxony, in order to unite his territory with that country.

'Secondly, Weimar has also carried on similar negotiations with the Government of Reusz, as well as with that of Rudolstadt, and found great willingness on their parts; that is what the Weimar Ministers say; as regards Altenburg I myself have seen the documents.

'Thirdly, Weimar has in the delegate Wydenbrugk in Frankfort a zealous advocate of her plans, and the matter will, I am sorry to say soon come before Parliament which is highly favourable to it, as Weimar has made it appear by means of the Press as if the Duchies were inclined to adopt the plan of union. All this demanded speedy and energetic opposition, I hastened first to Weimar, and meeting with no frankness and favour on the part of the Ministers, I went to Altenburg. They gave me full information, and I even succeeded in being chosen as a mediator by Altenburg, as well in the project of union as for private affairs. I at once began on the latter, tried to form a new Ministry and negotiated personally with the republican association which rules Altenburg. I fought with the "Jacobins" for nine hours but went forth victorious.

'Very little interference was necessary for success, and I think that the machinery of State will work for at least a few weeks longer. I had to treat the Duke like a sick man, ... and by this means the state of things was made clearer to me.

'The poor people parted from me with bitter tears, and I could hardly refrain from sadness, as I saw how we were going to meet destruction. On the 22nd, I succeeded in prevailing upon Weimar, Altenburg, Meiningen, Reusz and Rudolstadt to send delegates to Gotha, to a great conference at which I myself would preside. The chief battle must then be fought. Stockmar is entirely of my opinion that the constituencies should not anticipate, but must submit to what

is decided by the majority and the administrators of the Empire.

The Conference did really begin on the 22nd of July. During the sitting the question of the union of all the Thuringian States was very eagerly discussed, but what the Weimar Minister, Herr von Watzdorf, heard on all sides must have been of but small consolation to him. The opposers of the Weimar project quite correctly founded their point of view on the fact that a number of reforms in the departments of justice and administration would be made possible by means of a closer co-operation of the governments, without recognising that an amalgamation into a united Thuringian State would be worth striving for from a monarchic point of view.

As regarded a certain community of institutions a beginning had already been made. In Jena, Head Ecclesiastical Councillor Schwarz had already mentioned a united church constitution at an assembly of Thuringian clerical authorities which took place a fortnight earlier. On my side there was all the less hindrance to an organic alliance of the Church in Thuringia, as I was about to refuse the rights allowed me as Head Bishop of the country in the bill to be laid before the Deputies according to Magna Charta, section 43.

In the same way it would be possible to form a number of common institutions in the Thuringian countries, and one marvelled all the more that they had not come to life much sooner and in less troubled times, as they were greatly needed. I may say of my Minister von Stein that he showed himself very favourably inclined towards all such practical questions of unity, and later also, as will be seen, worked towards their solution. On the other hand, he opposed the aspirations of the Weimar Government as decidedly as I did.

Eight days after the above mentioned Conference of Ministers, the constitutional unions of Thuringia also held an assembly of delegates in Gotha, at which it was also seen that in these circles also the Weimar united States project had but few supporters. In spite of all argumentative efforts, the Weimar affair was not brought to a sufficiently favourable conclusion.

The usual resolutions concerning the constitutional monarchy with a democratic basis could not but help over the

real difficulties, or at least seem to, but in reality the representatives of the constitutional union were more disposed to expect the constituency of Germany from Frankfort than to seek the ordering of home affairs in Weimar. For as regarded the private affairs there they were far behind the development of the constitution of the other territories. At the assembly of the town delegates the proceedings had not once been made public, and in the Diet the proposals to be made for the reform of the jurisdiction and the administration were not yet to be brought forward.

The Republican party in Thuringia might accordingly hope that their affairs would really be thoroughly attended to through the mediatisation of the small States. As, however, these prospects were soon done away with, the so-called people's union began in September, on their own account, to prepare for revolution and to rouse the masses of the people.

The weakness and want of courage of the governing heads everywhere and at all times afforded an opportunity for this. Thus there was a really sad occurrence in Schleiz during the last days of July, as a deputation from the radical unions presented a petition to the Prince, which so irritated the latter, that he went so far as to utter hard words to the leaders. An assembly of the people was immediately held, they sent a large and threatening deputation to the Prince, demanded satisfaction, and really succeeded not only in obtaining all that had before been refused, but a written reparation of honour from the Prince.

The most serious danger did not, however, come from the princely residences, but from the fortress of Erfurt, where a regular revolutionary committee had built its nest in the midst of the Prussian troops, and systematically agitated for the republicanising of Thuringia. At the head of this movement was Berlepsch, who at length succeeded in bringing about bloody battles in Erfurt.

The republican uprising would, it was said, be supported by the Thuringian forest districts, after which they were going to obtain possession of the fortress. The revolutionary committee had been particularly successful in raising propaganda in the Gotha public domain of Georgenthal. As the Ministry were strictly informed of the preparations which the

republicans had made in order to strike on an appointed day, I confined four companies in Gotha, so that we might at once interfere.

Whilst I was in Reinhardsbrunn, I was awakened during the night a few days before the outbreak of the Erfurt revolution. They brought me information that the meeting place was in the Finsterbergen, where the insurgents were to assemble. I sent at once to Gotha, ordered two companies to move out, and that the troops were to be quickly sent on in waggons which must be procured, in order to take up their position at seven o'clock in the morning in front of the place, which was three miles off. I myself went on horseback to Finsterbergen and found the troops in the place, as my orders had been punctually carried out. Without exciting too much inquiry, I had the paths to the high-standing place occupied, and rode to the spot accompanied by an adjutant. Many barricades had been raised which were filled with a large number of excited wood-cutters and many strangers. At my energetic address the nearest barricade was cleared so far that I managed to reach the common-hall, where the burgomaster and a good number of well-meaning people had assembled, who were delighted at my appearance, and once more restored to courage and presence of mind.

I explained in a few words that I demanded the ringleaders to be delivered up, and that I would otherwise have them taken by force. But as was to be expected, the parish director and officials were not in a position to fulfil my demands, and it was indeed hardly to be carried out, considering the mob which had collected together. I therefore sent the troops an order to enter, and in a few moments the tumultuous crowd had retired from the barricades. The two companies marched unhindered up to the hall, and I took from twenty to thirty persons prisoners. They were tied to waggons, taken to Gotha, and given over to justice, which sentenced most of them to heavy punishments.

Popular feeling throughout the whole forest at once began to cool down after the failure of the rising in Finsterbergen. A large assembly of the people which Berlepsch had called together before the town of Ohrdruff, ended most pitiably. He appeared there armed and carrying a red flag, and it was

said that he wished to proclaim the Republic, but a large number of woodcutters, who were on the side of the Government, had decided to put a complete stop to the affair, if the announced intention was carried out. As the revolutionists had been informed of this eddy in the river of excitement, they thought it more prudent to avoid all provocation, and left the field.

As regarded the mediatising tendency, the events in Coburg and Gotha had added but little to the stock already in hand. Nevertheless, I never doubted for a moment that circumstances might intervene, which, in the interests of the whole German Fatherland would render a more extensive renunciation of rights of sovereignty fitting, I may even say, that I fearlessly looked forward to this eventuality. As regards the latter, my brother and uncle did not on all points agree with my views, but were rather far more conservative with regard to the rights of sovereignty of our family; nevertheless, the Prince was so patriotic in relation to the universal German questions, that he would not for an instant have hesitated to cast off the semblance of a power which could find no room in the wide German kingdom, if it had really and entirely become fitting.

'The Thuringian kingdom,' said my brother, in reply to a letter from me of the 19th July, 'would make the German confusion still more confused, and Weimar has no claim whatever to say that it belongs to her. Meanwhile, I do not think that this idea originated at the Court of Weimar. The Thuringian idea is an old one, raised by the burschenschaft* of Jena, as, indeed, most of the ideas of to-day which are not of French origin, are the result of the student dreams of former days. Meyer knew most of the heroes of the university, and finds all their views unchanged. He himself took part in the development of the Thuringian idea twenty years ago at Jena. This circumstance is worthy of notice, as it suggests a large number of supporters of this idea, of whom one knows nothing. Besides, a standing means of negotiating co-operatively for the Saxon Houses and territories would be of great value. The latter would be the fruitful part of the plan, and should therefore be cultivated. This seems to have been your feeling

* A certain political association of students at the German university.

also, when you summoned the Congress in Gotha. The principal thing will be to bring forward the practical advantages, and to contrast them with the poetical idea, for example, the meeting of a committee of Deputies of the different lands every three years to come to an agreement over a thousand different interests would be highly beneficial.' In this respect my brother also was very well satisfied with the results of the Conference at Gotha, and on the 9th of August he wrote concerning this: 'The points which were considered are all practical, and one only wonders that the Revolution of the year 1848 was needed to bring about so ostensibly a necessary explanation. The governments and the bureaucrats really have much to answer for.'

If the matter of the union of the Thuringian lands was grasped and judged in so objective a manner by my brother, a letter written by my uncle on the 16th of October 1848 about the mediatisings question of the smaller States, undoubtedly belongs to the most important statesmanlike documents of the time, and I gladly seize the opportunity of preventing it from falling into oblivion:

'*Laeken*, 16*th October* 1848.

'. . . . Now I am coming to the principal point, which is the reason of my sending you my faithful Liebmann. Dr Meyer arrived in the evening of the 14th from Frankfort, and informed me of the success of the efforts there to make the small Princes abdicate *willingly*, and that Karl Leiningen *especially* is at the bottom of this business. Meyer says that he saw you a short time ago, and that he told you what opinion he entertained of the position which he looks upon as the fittest which could be adopted with regard to the constituent classes (in Gotha). What he says on this subject appears to me to be good. These constituent representations are a great danger to you, and indeed, as the National Assembly meets in Frankfort, I do not see what their aim is. In any case you must endeavour to remain on a friendly footing with them, and to make them understand what they would have to lose if they become constituent parts of a larger State.

'Next, you must explain to them that you would do anything in order to help to establish a general union and the

respective unity of Germany. Already before the Revolution of February the idea of making military affairs a matter for the Confederacy was put into words. Many other concessions can be made in this sense. But with regard to one thing, do not allow yourself to be shaken, do not accept a civil list for the House Domains! As things are, that would be the greatest misfortune which could befall you. I do not need to explain this to you.

'Now for the second part. The real Unitarians had an idea that Prussia should be absorbed by Germany, that it should be placed at the head of the German communities and that the other States could only follow the example of Prussia allowing herself to be absorbed by Germany. This was Stockmar's idea. Hard as this notion may appear to me, yet it cannot be denied that if the idea of unity is more closely examined it must almost appear thus. The complications in Prussia prevented this plan from being carried out, and several new plans came to light, all of which you know. The very newest one, of which I had already heard from Meyer, is, that those States are to be persuaded into giving up their existence *themselves*, which apparently do not possess sufficient vital power to keep up alone.

'Among these are reckoned—1. Baden. 2. Kurhesse. 3. Nassau. 4. Hohenzollern. 5. Altenburg, Meningen, etc.; they wish to extend this to all the small ones, and they are to relinquish their position of sovereignty of their own accord. I have heard two versions of the results which are to come of this. The first is, that the first immediate Imperial country will have to be created from this as a future kernel. Prussia, who still took a rather lively part in the matter in September, noticed, however, what it was coming to, and was very much *opposed* to it.

'The second version is, that the small States which are incapable of governing themselves are to be given up to the larger ones.

'If an end is put once for all to the matter according to the wish for the common unity of the single States, I understand that the small States will resign themselves to it; but if the small States are given up to the larger ones, this will of course hinder the unity of Germany *still more*, as it will

strengthen the particularism of the kingdoms still more, and the union will therefore be more difficult to attain. To add to such a state of things by willingly abdicating, when it would work no good for the unity, would be to act like a bad patriot, and, what is more, would be a really silly manner of committing suicide. One must never give up one's rights one's self, for then they are lost beyond hope of recovery; force is not right, let him insist upon it who will. Moreover, you cannot undertake such a self abdication without consulting the agnates, and I would advise you as regards the constitutional representatives, to entrench yourself behind the agnates. The agnates are *collective,* which is always an advantage; they have undoubted rights, which cannot be taken away from them without their being consulted, to do which, you in your position have no right whatever. The nearest agnate is in England in a very poor position, the other most important one is here, with the key to Germany in his hands, which also deserves some respect.

'The historical position may now be taken into consideration. Almost all the larger States and several of the smaller ones are a mosaic of different territories. This is the case with Baden, Nassau, Würtemberg, Bavaria and Prussia. Saxony alone possesses nothing on both sides, which the House has not possessed for centuries. Both lines have even been deprived of a portion of their old and, in part, real family possessions. The losses of the elder line, which drew the chestnuts out of the fire for the reformation of that time, were large enough three hundred years ago. Of this elder line, the not important branches in Europe are the very ones which have rendered brilliant service to constitutional concerns!

'I resume: A great deal of friendliness and disposition to come to an understanding in representative transactions, to make a sacrifice, also, but to accept no civil list, which always makes the Prince a kind of state beggar. As regards the kingdom: To give up all moments of sovereignty which may do good to the whole kingdom. If the kingdom insists upon the abolishments of all separate States; a hearty and patriotic consent to such a step. If, however, it is only a matter of separate spoliation and suicide, a polite reference to the

common right, *le droit commun*, and to international right and in no case to abdicate of yourself!— . . . .'

My uncle's letter, which in spite of the haste of the moment, betrays his whole grasp and style, was written on the supposition that I was only too much inclined to yield to the current of the times, which could not be said to be very correct. But if one follows his description of the universal situation, one must give him credit for a deep political perception of the situation. How far I agreed with his conception will be best seen in a letter from me, which informed him of the Prussian proposals for the institution of a college of Princes of which I shall have more to say later on in connection with greater matters. I will only bring forward that here which I especially wished to mention as my answer to the fears of the King:

'. . . . The way to a partial execution of the Prussian proposals is now clear. . . . By this means I hope that I have made the fatal melting down of the small States into a Thuringian kingdom at the head of which Weimar wished to place himself, quite impossible. Did I not care for the universal welfare and were I not an enemy to all revolutionary, efforts, it would have been an easy task for me to place *myself* at the head of a much larger union.

'It sounds like arrogance, but—unfortunately—I might say I am at present enjoying a degree of popularity and influence in this part of Germany, such as I never dreamt of. Unconsciously, and without having in the least sought it, I have attained the doubtful honours of a "people's man," and inconvenient and ticklish as the position is, I have nevertheless the ability to push the German matter very powerfully, by serving the whole while neglecting my own interests. I have in this way already rendered many a service to different reigning cousins, but they are none the less envious of the position which I occupy.'

Anyone, however, who knew the relations from personal observation and adhered to no empty theories, could not help noticing during this time how the spectre of the small States had taken a much deeper hold on the most extended masses of the people than would be admitted in Frankfort. The larger number of the Thuringians wished to know very little of all ideas of melting down, and the thought of mediatisation

also, if it had assumed a form, would certainly not have helped on the work of unity. Remarkable to say, my own cousin, Leiningen, was one of the most prominent personages in Frankfort who wished to see the small States set aside. As President of the Ministry of the Kingdom he had really put this idea into motion, and was continually telling me that I ought to adopt this view. Concerning him, this may be the moment to bring forward an address of the Diet of Gotha, which treats this theme in an exhaustive manner. It was drawn up by men who, on the ground of the most extended election represented the country, and who said that no guarantees liberal and democratic enough could be demanded in relation to internal affairs. On the 10th of November they drew up the following readable letter to the Frankfort National Assembly:

'We are appointed by the unbiassed election of the inhabitants of the Duchy of Saxe-Gotha to consider and establish a constitution suitable to the wants of the land, drawn up by our liberal-minded Duke, as well as to exercise the rights thereby pertaining to the whole body of our fellow-citizens. The land to which our calling is limited, is of but mean compass. The Duchy of Gotha numbers about 105,000 inhabitants, but the Gothaer feels a deep attachment for his small Fatherland—for the Thuringian mountains and their nearest surroundings in a northern direction—he honours a long list of noble princes, the landgraves of Thuringia and the Dukes of Saxony are his; he loves the town of Gotha, as the abode of highly deserving German men, as the princely ancestral seat, whence Duke Ernest the Pious, the progenitor of the whole House of Gotha, reigned over the duchy, when it still embraced Meiningen, Hildburghausen, Coburg-Saalfeld and Altenburg. We have been together for six weeks, in order to ensure to the country freedom and order according to the demands of the new times, and partly to do away with, partly to lessen heavy burdens dating from the Middle Ages, in order to distribute the duties of the State in right proportion, in order so to shape the constitution as the consideration of that unity of Germany demands, which is being striven for by your highly honoured men in whom is reposed the confidence of our great universal Fatherland. Nor do we doubt that we

shall succeed by means of a convention with our Duke, in soon meeting and opposing the scruples likewise raised by the defenders of the system of mediatisation, as well as the supporters of the Republic, in consideration of the excessive expenses of Government in a manner corresponding to the wishes of the inhabitants of our land. In the midst of the fulfilment of our duties our gaze is fixed on the resolution of the high National Assembly of the 30th of October in this year, according to which various proposals for the mediatisation or the union of the smaller German States have been assigned to the constitutional committee for discussion and report.

'In respect of the decision of this question we may be allowed to repose the greatest confidence in the circumspection and justice of our eminent National Assembly; hereby we particularly find the Duchy of Gotha most completely represented through the description which our fellow-citizen J. G. Becker of Gotha elected as a fellow-member of the Assembly of the States of the German Empire by the Duchy of Gotha, delivered to the great Assembly on the 4th inst. Meanwhile we will in any case hereby plainly express our confident hope, that the Duchy of Gotha will be recognised as an ancestral land, most of the constituent parts of which have been torn from it by former distributions of provinces.'

The address was signed by all the members of the Diet. Whilst their aim and intention is clearly to be seen in it, I need hardly remark that the whole Thuringian question really lay in the lap of the National Assembly, and therefore threatened to assume all the more acute a character from the fact that the military measures adopted by the States Ministry immediately concerned Thuringia, and numbers of Confederate troops transported thither, the billeting of which was highly burdensome to the land, gave rise to the widespread belief that it was a matter of forced mediatisation. In consequence of this, Deputy Becker had also received a large number of petitions and counter-declarations from country parishes also, and had added them to his abovementioned representation in the address of the Diet to the National Assembly. An Imperial Commissioner had been added to the Confederate troops, who, in the person of Herr

von Mühlenfels in every way encouraged the Thuringian union project. In the National Assembly itself, the Weimar plenipotentiary, Herr von Wydenbrugk, was working for it and, wonderful to say, was supported in this matter by Prussian Deputies of the Province of Saxony. That, however, Prussia had not won a single friend in Germany that would support her in founding of a new middle State, but only strengthened the opposition of Saxony and Hanover seemed clear.

Concerning this situation Herr von Stein sent me information in December from Frankfort, which will, it is true, somewhat anticipate the events and negotiations which immediately followed, but which may be said to be suitably introduced here on account of its objective and scientific statement of the existing state of affairs:

'Right as it seems to me to stand by Saxony, and to go with Saxony in the accomplishment of the German Empire, this might yet be doubtful if, on the other hand, the Royal Saxon Cabinet were to withdraw more from Prussia with Bavaria and Saxony. If the break which it is feared will occur in German affairs does occur, it will certainly be to the interest of the small German States to unite themselves as strongly and cordially with Prussia as possible.

'But be German with Prussia, otherwise rather Prussian. This, at least, is my opinion, and I believe that of the majority in Central Germany. In Frankfort I laid upon myself the task of finding out what grounds our Royal Commissioner and the Ministers of the Empire as well, have for their dislike for and evident distrust of Saxony, and the following facts became evident to me. Mühlenfels is the intimate university friend of Wydenbrugk, and is the brother-in-law of Professor Duncker in Halle; the former is known to be the creator of the idea of the united Thuringian State, and the latter the chief advocate in Frankfort of the Prussian predominance. The Prussians and friends of Prussia in Frankfort, do not trust Saxony on account of her still continued dislike to everything Prussian, and, although it has been admitted to me that the excited antipathy would be lessened by the alliance with a million Thuringians or eight such territories which were accustomed to act according to Prussia's

example, yet people are anxious, and indeed rightly so, lest a republican heart might be formed by this alliance in Germany, for which anxiety, only too good reason was and is given by the elections made by Saxony of members of the Parliament, and latterly to the Saxon Diet. Against this the only means to be resorted to, is a *strong* show of Imperial power, and if this is not done, it will then certainly be better *not* to seek an alliance with Saxony.'

In the foregoing words, Herr von Stein already took into consideration a phase of the transactions which only set in after the overthrow of the Weimar project. In order to describe the development of matters connectedly, I must once more return to the decisions of the National Assembly.

When the General Constitutional Bill came under consideration, all the proposals made in paragraphs 5 and 6 for the mediatisation or union of the smaller States, were first referred to the constitutional committee on the 30th of October for discussion and report. Nevertheless, the Royal Commissioner von Mühlenfels was given the task in Thuringia of furthering the work of uniting the smaller States by means of conferences with the Ministers. The principal Assembly had been called together in Gotha on the 15th of December, and took place in order, as it says in the protocol, 'to debate and to come to an understanding concerning the future political position of the Thuringian States, partly for the whole united Fatherland, partly for each other, and the respective assemblies of delegates.'

How far the Imperial Ministry had instructed the commissioner concerning single questions, or whether the latter thought himself free to act a good deal on his own account, I cannot say with certainty; and, as the conference only arrived almost exclusively at negative results, it did not strike me as necessary to follow the matter in all its deviations. During the whole negotiations, so much that was unpractical and arbitrary appeared side by side with so many necessary and desirable efforts, that, on the whole, one would have been glad to see matters entrusted to more skilled hands and more favourable times. But, concerning the Ministers who had assembled at Gotha, the testimony must not be withheld that they recognised, with the greatest

resignation, all the evils of smaller States, picked them out, and published them in a protocol without, it is true, any possible practical proposal being made, or anything being said, which might lead to a new manner of development.

Herr von Mühlenfels had proposed three points for discussion in the form of questions: (1) How far is it possible or necessary for the Thuringian States everywhere to maintain the *status quo* of their independence with regard to the Central Power? (2) In case this *status quo* cannot be maintained, how far, then, is the annexation of these States, singly or all together, to larger States, and to which ones advisable? (3) Or, if this should not meet with approval, is it possible and advisable that the Thuringian States should unite in a kind of united state?

These questions were tolerably comprehensively answered in the form of a protocol by Watzdorf from Weimar, Stein from Gotha, Spessart from Meiningen, Gablenz from Altenburg, Chop from Sondershausen, Röder from Rudolstadt, Bröhmer from Coburg, and Otto from Greiz. Of the Ministers present, with the exception of Herr von Watzdorf, they all unanimously agreed, that the prevalent inclination of the people as a whole was certainly for the maintenance of the independence of the individual States. If one reads over at this day the utterances of the certainly not preponderant Conservative members of the conference, one cannot help receiving the impression that a large part of the audible expressions of so-called public opinion had no great foundation amongst the people, but were for the most part only those of a small circle of the middle classes.

The insight into the necessity for a political unity was clearly stronger amongst Government circles than amongst the great masses, and a salutary influence on the great ideas of the times could therefore only arise from the honest co-operation of the Princes and their Ministers. But this was the very point, which had been the most overlooked and misapprehended by the liberal parties in the single assemblies as well as the German National Assembly.

Amongst the Saxon Ministers, as regarded this affair, Herr von Spessart had, at any rate, chosen the simplest view conceivable. He openly declared to the conference in the

name of the Meiningen Government, that no changes were necessary in the political relations of the small States generally or particularly. He did, indeed, admit that, as regarded German Confederate affairs, the German National Assembly had now been summoned to influence by their eventual decisions the future of the constitution as well as the state of individual rights and separate constitutions, but as for the rest, he ended his speech for the preservation of the independence of the small States with a declaration worthy of notice for its acknowledged frankness:

'I will bring forward still another reason for our independence in relation to the Central Power and its wishes: We ourselves have a more secure position than the Central Power. We have for ourselves a historical foundation, whereas that of the Central Power is certainly a loose one.'

In the course of the debate the Royal Commissioner had found an opportunity of emphasising the fact that, besides the representation for Meiningen, no one regarded the preservation of the *status quo* as possible. Nevertheless, no one was in a position to propose a new form for any union whatever of the Thuringian States, and the Royal Commissioner himself was forced, as it were, to acknowledge the fruitlessness of the discussion as far as this was concerned.

Minister von Stein regretted that they had not agreed to a division on this project. Herr von Watzdorf declared himself decidedly against the absorbtion of the small States by one of the larger ones; in this respect he would listen to as little about Saxony as about Prussia. Amiably disposed as the Saxon people had shown themselves, he said with regard to the German question, they would not be better than the Prussian nation, and were just as particular as the latter.

A common Thuringian Diet was proposed, which found much general approbation, but when a question was raised as to its competency, it became evident that it would be exceedingly difficult to employ it in a suitable way. No one would admit a union of finances as being possible, military matters were still presumptively reserved for the Central Power and the Parliament, general commercial matters were claimed by the tolls' union.

When at length Herr von Watzdorf brought forward a

bill, drawn up by himself for a State convention, which would bring the Governments into closer relations with Weimar, Herr von Spessart burst forth after the reading with the words: 'The closing paragraph of this bill should really run thus: "From this time forth you Thuringian States are no longer independent, but belong to Weimar!"'

The result of the consultation concerning the 18th paragraph, containing the Thuringian States project, was, on the whole, purely a negative one, and an idea, which at any other time, and principally ten or twenty years earlier, would not have been without worth and merit, looked as if it would soon be buried. The further attempts to establish a greater bond between the Thuringian States, were founded on an entirely different basis. After the opposition which had been shown the first project, Weimar succeeded in inclining popular opinion more to the Saxon idea.

In February 1849, Herr von Watzdorf came forward with a very comprehensive project for a great Saxon-Thuringian States Union. He sent a bill from Frankfort to the Governments, according to which nine States, with the kingdom of Saxony at their head, were to form the States Union, which provided military matters, as well as the making of laws and the administration, and was to bring about the common representation of the United States with regard to their relations to the German Confederacy.

Amongst the proposals which had hitherto been made in this direction, the new plan of the Government of Weimar distinguished itself by its great clearness and determination. Towards this, my Government demeaned themselves in a thoroughly benevolent and responsive manner, without, however, there being any possibility of doing anything decisive, as long as no understanding could be come to concerning the settlement of the German question, which pointed ever more decidedly towards the Prussian Empire. The worst of the project was that the Royal Saxon Government did not throw off the discreet reserve which they had shown from the first in all questions of union.

Nevertheless, Weimar, as well as Saxony, had particularly burdened my Government with the blame for the non-success of these plans. I myself not only gave the matter my

closest attention, but made my brother fully acquainted with the negotiations. He enlarged on the December proposal in a very widely embracing memorial, which was of the greatest interest, both personally and objectively.

'*Windsor Castle, 9th January* 1849.

'I have carefully read the Protocol of the conference of the Ministers of the Thuringian States, and their agreement concerning the formation of a Thuringian States Union, and the following ideas have occurred to me thereby: 1. Desirable as the foundation of this States Union certainly is, and necessary as it is that the Governments should now come to an understanding respecting the formula of this plan, yet it appears wise to me to delay the execution of this work until the definite settlement of the German Imperial constitution, considering that the success and endurance of this work will depend upon the energetic grasp of the wheelwork of the great German machine of State to be set up in Thuringia. Therefore let the plan be carried on as far as possible, but let the final execution be delayed until the Imperial Constitution has been firmly established.

'2. In the very small States a complete carrying out of the constitutional system, and particularly one which is laid on the widest democratic foundation, as is now universally demanded in Germany, may be realised only to a certain degree with the purely personal relations of the individual Thuringian States. These States have only obtained the possibility of a complete realisation through a united popular representation. It looks now, however, as I see with regret, as if that system with all its intricacies for the united Diet, is also to be continued in the individual States. I should consider this a political mistake. For if the consciousness of the want of many essential preliminary conditions for representing a complete constitutional State appear to have already contributed to bring the Thuringian States to a decision, to seek the guarantee of their endurance in their union, how much more will this want be felt if all the greater German interests are decided by a German Imperial Diet and the responsible Ministry, but the more partial interests by a Thuringian Diet, and the elbow-room of the individual constitutions will there-

fore be limited solely to the smallest local interests. Certainly, the representation of the single States must also continue, but it must here be assigned to a space which, according to my judgment, would only suffice for the competency of provincial assemblies and administrative authorities, and to whom, for instance, a Double-House system and the responsibility of the Ministry would of course be denied.

3. This Double-House system, however, without which a really constitutional system cannot be carried out, I demand for the organisation of the united Diet, and, indeed, that it be such, that representatives of the individual States may form the Upper House, after the pattern of the constitution of the empire and the Prussian constitution, but chosen representatives must form the Lower House for the whole States Union. Such an organisation would be in harmony with the principle according to which the constitutional system in Germany generally aspires to establish itself. Moreover, the States must take into consideration the appointing of a seat in the Upper House for the major Princes of their reigning Houses, as it is of more importance now than ever to afford these Princes the possibility of a public, constitutional and popular education, and an early, active share in promoting the welfare of their lands.

'4. If the Thuringian Regents and Princely Houses wish to maintain their princely position founded on the respect and love of their subjects in the impending transformation of their former patrimonial States into democratically constituted ones, and at the same time the change of the German State Confederacy into a single Constitutional Confederate State, they must accept no civil list, but must possess a House income for the support of their Court and household, which, if possible, needs no additions from the taxes, and over which no chamber can exercise any authority. The domains of the Saxon Duchies were until now mixed possessions, of mixed origin, and from their revenues, which, again, were mingled with taxes, provided the means to meet the expenses of the Regent as well as the State. As a division is to be made therein, it is but right and just, according to principle, that the domains themselves should be divided between State and Regent, that is, that one portion of the same shall become the

sole property of the State, the other the sole possession of the Regent's family. But the taxes should then be given to the State. This is the only just solution which I can see of a very difficult question, as advantageous for the people as for the Regent, which, if not thus solved, must continually endanger the existence of the State as well as that of the Regents. The Thuringian States should make the proposed solution as a part of their agreement, leaving the provisional settlement of the divisional modalities to the individual States.'

As may be seen from my brother's memorial, our House opposed no hindrance to any of the Unions striven for in Germany, nor to any matters relating to the great questions of the individual or combined fatherland. If it obtained no practical success either here or there, we could say on our side that the Power was wanting to assure the execution of the best intentions on our part. But if nothing was to be attained in the political department, one might at least hope that the endeavours to bring about unity in military affairs would meet with better success.

Movements for a new order of army regulations had been repeatedly made by the Imperial Ministry. In August 1848, proposals had been made to bring about a closer annexation of the Thuringian contingent to the Saxon army, In February 1849, conferences were summoned to Weimar by Major General von Holtzendorf, to consider the formation of the Thuringian and princely Reusz imperial contingent into an independent division.

In order to obtain information beforehand concerning the sentiments and intentions of the Saxon Court and Ministry, I went on the 18th of January to Dresden and stayed there some time. Unfortunately the only impression made upon me was that people there were at that time in a situation which rendered any kind of decision impossible. Herr von Stein had quite rightly written to me on the 26th of December:

'If it will be any great comfort to Your Highness to speak with the King of Saxony and his Ministers before the Conference, I will not advise against it. The door to Saxony can, and must not be closed to us through the Conference,

and Meiningen will certainly stand by us with Saxony in military matters at least. That, however, the relations of the Cabinet to Austria and Prussia will at once be truly and plainly disclosed in Dresden, so that one will be able to say what will be done, if the imperial project falls to the ground, I doubt all the more, because I am rather inclined to think that even in Dresden it is not yet known.'

The latter remark showed the situation at the Court as well as in the Saxon Ministry. Remarkable to relate, the blame was later laid on me in Dresden, because the project of a Saxon military convention had failed. As I myself belonged to the Saxon military union, and adhered most faithfully to the Saxon army, this pained me greatly, and gave rise to an exceedingly unpleasant correspondence with the Saxon War Minister Rabenhorst, whose retrospective observations throw a light on the state of things in 1848 and 1849.

As may be understood, the reasons for the non-success which has been laid to my door by the Saxon Government, lay rather in the political relations of the year 1850, than in my attitude in the question of the military convention, but in the feeling of complete triumph with which the Austro-Saxon policy came out of the affair, I was made to feel that the Thuringian-Saxon project had not been accomplished. I will only treat that portion of the correspondence here, which related to the question of the military convention, reserving the other for later use in my narrative. From this the reader will best be able to see my real position in relation to Saxony.

'I will only remind your Excellency,' I wrote to the war Minister, 'of the Conferences which occupied the winter of the year 1849, and which had as an object the lasting release of the Duchies of Saxony from their agnatic union, and the formation of a so-called Thuringian United State. My activity and my efforts alone were successful in frustrating that fatal project. But I did not wish to stop there; foreseeing new complications, I tried to induce the Royal Saxon Government, by taking advantage of the universal striving for a closer union of the smaller middle German States, to establish a confederacy at the head of which the Kingdom of Saxony would have stood, and the immediate consequences of which would

have been the union of those smaller contingents with the Saxon army. My efforts remained unrewarded. The Saxon Ministry of that time had not the earnest desire to carry out this plan, so important for Saxony as well as for us.

'Springtime arrived, the campaign in Schleswig put an end in every sense of the word to further negotiations, the crisis in Dresden followed, and shortly afterwards the kingdom of Saxony concluded the so-called Confederacy of the three Kings in alliance with Prussia and Hanover. The more important this step was, the more I marvelled, even at that time, that the Duchies could be left entirely unregarded; they were forsaken by their nearest agnates and individually forced by circumstances to take part in the alliance under many different conditions imposed on them.

'How important it would have been if Saxony had closed this important alliance by a closer Union with the Duchies! Only a few months passed before Saxony found herself forced to withdraw from the Union, for reasons which I am not called upon to criticise, until she at length succeeded in definitely separating herself from her allies. Has Saxony perhaps tried during all this time, painful to us as it was, to win us over to her interests and plans? We were left unnoticed, and Saxony sought alliances opposed to our interests, yes, even inimical to them, so that a chasm was opened between us which might easily have led to the most deplorable conflicts.'

In Minister von Rabenhorst's reply, of which I will only mention the most essential portions, he said, amongst other things: 'The Royal House of Saxony has not failed to see that the realisation of the idea of a Thuringian United State with the dissolution of the agnatic relations to the Royal House has been wrecked with the distinct co-operation of Your Highness. Your Highness's sharp glance had seen that the ideas of a Herr von Mühlenfels—a man, who formerly, at least, devoted himself to entirely different aims than the fortification of Thuringia's individual States, or to a Thuringian United State,—that, I say, the realisation of this idea would have advanced the interests of neither the kingdom of Saxony nor those of the Thuringian States themselves, especially not the interests of those amongst the smaller ones,

which would perhaps have devolved to a larger Thuringian State.

'Equally little do I allow myself to doubt for a moment that a confederacy of the smaller States of Central Germany with the Kingdom of Saxony would have accorded with the intentions of Your Highness; and I frankly deplore with Your Highness the fact that Your Highness found so little support in these efforts amongst the other Princes of Thuringia. No inclination of the Thuringian Heads of the States for a closer alliance with the Kingdom of Saxony was to be perceived from the utterances of their Ministers. It even appeared to me, that, since Minister von Stein was accredited to the Central Power in Frankfort, shortly after the Gotha negotiations, that a not unsubstantial change even in the policy of Your Highness's Cabinet was perceptible at the same time as the perceptible alteration in Herr von Stein's views, without, as far as I know, this having been deserved by the Royal House of Saxony. There appeared to be almost a *dislike* of such an alliance on the part of the smaller States during the conferences. A universal consent appeared more than improbable. The prepared union of the contingents to Weimar's decidedly shown inclination for the interests of the throne of Prussia likewise failed; and the plenipotentiary from Meiningen seemed in this case to have been supplied with no instructions, or at least with but very incomplete ones.

'The Royal Government of Saxony nevertheless, with frank liking for Your Highness, hastened to meet your wishes on the occasion of the campaign in Schleswig, as far as they went, and it afforded hearty pleasure to my Royal Sovereign to anticipate those who felt themselves moved to thank Your Highness with honest warmth for your very successful efforts in this campaign.

'His Majesty the King, my Sovereign, still feels the same towards Your Highness; His Majesty will, with undivided partiality, strive no less to preserve the link which unites the Royal House to all the other Thuringian States.'

In the further course of the letter, Rabenhorst spoke of Saxony's general German policy during the years 1849 and 1850, and I will return in due time to this part of his letter.

It need only be said here, that the War Minister failed even remotely to defend the attitude and proceedings of the Oberländ Ministry. In Dresden the Saxons were so confused, by the crisis of May 1849, that nothing offered itself to the Saxon Ministry in which on one part did not breathe the extremest Radicalism, and on the other was represented by Herr von Pfordten.

German affairs generally assumed an aspect in which Prussia alone had to decide, and in Thuringian House affairs all projects of union, all military conventions had fallen to the ground.

I therefore began in the first months of the year 1849 to strive still more earnestly than before to bring about, at least in my own territories, an amelioration of affairs by means of the union of Coburg and Gotha, and now directed all my efforts towards establishing a common basis of State administration at least in the constitutions of both Duchies.

But, strange to say, I now met with a degree of opposition from my own officials as well as in the Diets and the classes, which is too significant of the times for me not to speak somewhat more at length of it. Little importance as these difficulties of administration and official life, which I now experienced, might have for the development of historical affairs on the whole, yet it may be proper to close this chapter with the description of those misfortunes of government, which in the year 1848 were not even to spare us, the man who was so powerful and so secured as to have nothing to fear personally.

The two men who, occupying the highest offices, led the affairs of State, were not, according to the older organism of administration, really subordinate to one another. As regarded internal affairs, States Councillor Bröhmer in Coburg was as independent as Minister von Stein in Gotha. External affairs were managed by the latter.

In order to keep the destructive condition of the divided administration and constitutions of the two lands continually before their eyes, as it were, the two high officials pursued one another with a passionate hate which could not be described. Bröhmer, in Coburg, who saw himself continually snubbed and mortified by the Gotha Minister, was plagued

by most painful envy, and wore himself out writing endless letters about his rival.

What Bröhmer could never get over, as regarded Stein's position in official hierarchy, was the fact that the latter had never gone through any regular law course, but had been promoted from the service of the administration, and was originally a forester. He therefore looked upon him as a sort of parvenu, and flaunted his own superiority in jurisprudence on every possible occasion.

My absence in the beginning of the year 1848 furnished an opportunity for the two statesmen to take one another by the hair, metaphorically speaking, now that the dawning Revolution demanded the most complete union of Government forces. Instead of this, the two Governments of Coburg and Gotha made war against one another by means of every conceivable artifice of bureaucracy, both openly and secretly, whilst I, called upon by both sides as the sovereign ruler of both lands, was forced to smooth matters over here, and to reconcile there.

Herr von Stein was an exceedingly independent, opulent man, an aristocrat in the good old sense of the word, unselfish, without any personal interests or pretensions, and, in quieter times, an excellent Government official. In the time of the great movement he showed himself by no means averse to the rising ideas, he entered into many things with almost youthful sympathy. On the other hand, he had not the talent for taking things into his own hands and commanding the storm, or even to defend the views of his sovereign, whose representative he should have been. Necessity and political distress worked too greatly on his views, and the wish to escape unpopularity of any kind rendered him more wavering during the time of such powerful excitements than he otherwise appeared.

I have been a witness, as I shall soon show, of the most remarkable scenes between him and Bröhmer, and controlled the most obstinate fights, but Stein always remained refined, whereas Bröhmer became noisy and excited, and exhibited a talent for written utterances against his sovereign ruler of which it would be a pity if at least a few had not been preserved.

Nevertheless, in spite of all this, I always felt a certain affection for Bröhmer, and received the most impossible things which he allowed himself with regard to me mostly with a certain amount of friendly humour. This arose from the fact that I saw in this remarkable man, a person who was most uncommon both inwardly and outwardly.

He had formerly been a member of the old burschenschaft. A Democrat at heart, he was not able entirely to suppress the expiring demagogic nature even in his prominent position. The more he inclined in his heart to fanciful idealism, the more his office and the 'unhappy princely service' impelled him to juridical pettifogging. His fine and widely-embracing juridical education, rendered him capable of carrying out everything which he earnestly desired, but his convictions were not at all steadfast, because he had set his heart on much loftier political things, even when he clearly saw that they were unattainable.

Thus he could, it is true, be the faithful and devoted servant of a master for whom he felt a personal attachment, and who infused into him a mental and moral interest, but this faithfulness was rather for the person than the master which he was to serve officially. If one wished to inquire into the ministerial custom of retiring from service at the slightest difference, which has grown so prevalent in the political world during the past thirty years, one might without question give my old Bröhmer the merit of being one of the chief founders of this constitutional method of later times. In fifteen months he sent in a written request for dismission no less than ten times, yet he always remained in office.

In so small a State as Coburg, the imitation of the great constitutional island kingdom and its Ministerial crises could not easily be brought to a pitch so exciting and so satisfying to the ambition, but Bröhmer formally threatened me more than once, that he would appear before the representatives and bring the latent crisis to an open break.

I had hardly returned from England in March 1848, before he requested leave to retire from State service, although, as he himself admitted in his letter, 'the warning to quit the service came at a very unseasonable time.' I could only deplore and appease. 'That you have again been

offended at my letter,' I answered on the 30th of March, amongst others, 'and have applied my remarks to yourself, grieves me. But with the present business pressure and the daily crowd of suppliants, I have no time to study my words when writing to my "most humble councillors" during these bad times.'

But one could not expect that my Privy States Councillor would have received friendly utterances of that kind in a particularly good spirit. The rights of the chase, the crown-lands question, the union of Coburg and Gotha, and military matters, furnished ever new reasons for the continually recurring declaration that he now found himself forced to refuse office.

When the war agitation during the last months of the year 1848 could not be subdued, I tried to rouse Bröhmer as well as Minister von Stein to resort at length to more energetic measures. When, weary of the unlawful doings of the masses in Gotha, I went to Coburg, I wrote to the Minister that the lawless condition of affairs had driven me away. Herr von Stein's turn immediately came to propose retirement.

'If that was seriously meant,' answered Herr von Stein, 'I cannot understand how Your Highness can allow me to retain my place a day longer. Someone will certainly be found who does not manage so miserably as Your Highness seems to think I have done. The danger is pressing, for I cannot see my pretended wrong-doing, and a change cannot therefore be expected.'

The chief battle with the two Ministers took place before that, however, when the question of the union of the Duchies was more seriously taken up in the beginning of 1849. I had conceived the idea of transferring the leadership of the combined Ministries of both Duchies to States Councillor Bröhmer, as Stein would no longer take the matter on his own shoulders. Bröhmer, on the contrary, was willing to lead a Ministry with Stein, but he demanded a formal, recognised one for Coburg, because, he said, the Coburgers would not allow themselves to appear as merely an annex to Gotha.

When I talked the matter over with Bröhmer, he was usually willing in principle, and at most made objections to

its execution. But the zeal of the Coburg States Councillor came to light when he had to speak out before the Assembly, but clad in the semblance of an official who knows his duty, and who defended an idea objectively and with strict official air, concerning which he spoke in an entirely different strain privately or amongst friends.

I soon obtained proof that no one was at the bottom more inimical to the union of the Duchies, either in Coburg or Gotha, than the officials themselves. In private intercourse what had been declared a necessity in official speech, was retracted with half words, ambiguous speeches and important face. Thus the whole project was finally made to appear in the light of a caprice of the Prince, to whom the concession had, indeed, been made that it was to be officially negotiated and defended, but they were quite pleased when people wrote and spoke against it.

In February 1842, under these circumstances, I composed the following letter to Bröhmer, in which I expressed myself as openly as possible, as the intimacy of our correspondence allowed this:

'My Good Bröhmer,—I had already finished a letter to you, when I received yours of the 6th. It now seems necessary to me to answer its contents otherwise than I would have before I received it. Allow me, openly and unrestrainedly, to tell you my views as a *friend*, as I am accustomed to do. I will not further discuss your whole conduct hitherto, which often appeared incomprehensible, I will also forget the insight which I was able to have into things during the past year, and which revealed much that was enigmatical; but, before it is too late, I will call out "halt" to you, in order to lead you from a path which you have trodden, to the misfortune of the country as well as of our family.

'I say frankly and openly, that after all which has occurred, and in spite of your efforts to prevent your real aim from being recognised, I see with pain that you were from the first opposed to a close union of the Duchies, and since a number of months, every time you had the opportunity of working in this important matter, have done everything in order to establish a formal separation.

'Your free, independent position in Coburg, the unlimited

confidence which I reposed in you on account of your learning and unusual aptitude in all matters relating to the land, yes, even my unceasing efforts to obtain for you the universal liking of the public, which often hesitated about adopting your views because they remembered the past, which popularity a Minister must have in these days, was taken advantage of by you solely in order to carry out your plans. The incessant quarrels and jealousies in the Ministry, often over matters of form, were used by you as a means of driving the poor deceived people to believe that, if they now withdraw themselves entirely from the uncertain union with Gotha and increase the number of Confederate States by one, they may expect golden times under your paternal guidance, whilst I, like you, know with all clear sightedness that only through the union of the Duchies will there be any possibility of retaining them both, and Coburg alone would certainly at once be set up as a real object of State ridicule. You suggest articles with this meaning, you call forth addresses in a well-meaning union of citizens which must show me your views you even seize the final means, and use my Representative Assembly, which is entirely led by you, and in which every member stands far below you in mind, knowledge and experience, to help you to execute your plans with regard to the sovereign. Supposing I were blind, or weak enough to submit in order to found an independent Duchy of Coburg, what would then be gained ?

'Up to the present, I have quietly allowed you to act, speak and write. I have accepted the reproaches which you made me with the same equanimity as your excited effusions and the continual prospect of your retirement. I have sought only good and excellent traits in you, and have overlooked your many peculiarities, as I knew how highly your good qualities were to be valued; but do not think that I shall remain neutral in a matter which concerns the welfare of my lands, my House, my honour even. Once more, I call to you as an old friend "Halt."

'Read these lines through with the same calmness with which they were written; they are not meant to insult, they only speak the truth. Do not answer me at once, but reflect quietly, how you are to end this game, which is

unworthy of you. I send you herewith a proposal, which is intended for a kind of justification. Be great, when others are small, and believe me, I had good reasons for so earnestly asking you to undertake the direction of the Ministry.

'Why do you reject it, and yet wish to establish a similar one but for Coburg alone? Is that wise and noble? Let me close, and wait for your reply, and do not come to me again about dismission. You must drink the cup which you filled for me.—Yours, etc.'

Bröhmer's reply followed immediately, in spite of my warning:

'MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,—Your Highness's letter of the 8th inst. came to hand last night. You do not wish me to answer it to-day, as I might be wanting in the necessary quiet and composure. Most Gracious Sovereign, the necessary time is wanting owing to the pressure of business which could not be delayed, and such manifold personal disturbances, for me to be able to answer your letter circumstantially, but not the necessary calmness of mind. Attacks against my office and that which is thereby confided to me, can rouse me to battle passionately. Your accusations are aimed at my person, and as they are unfounded, and I have a good conscience, they do not disturb my peace of mind. I may go no further to-day. Flowers of speech are unknown to me. Where it is necessary I speak with the most decided frankness, and therefore do so here also. Most Gracious Sovereign! Your accusations are of such a remarkable kind, that the contents of your letter, when I read it early this morning, towards two o'clock, astounded me. Whoever the persons may be who place themselves between Your Highness and me, and be my future fate what it may, I am convinced that Your Highness will regret having written the letter now in my hands. Your Highness will receive my forced reply to-morrow. As Your Highness desires of me, I most submissively beg Your Highness to act magnanimously, wisely and justly.—I remain with the deepest reverence, Your Highness's most submissive

'G. J. BRÖHMER.

'*Coburg, February 9th* 1849.'

In the more circumstantial document of justification which followed this, Bröhmer had simply juridically metamorphosed my friendly representations into a list of accusations which he pretended were, if true, simply and solely calculated to prove him guilty of high treason. More straightforward, and to the purpose, was his reference that, in the confidential sitting of the States Assembly 'notwithstanding the consciousness that I was hereby losing the greater part of my hitherto enjoyed popularity, I have attempted to represent the union of the two lands as possible in every way, as advisable, even as a necessary measure.'

The matter was really taken more earnestly in hand during the following months, and negotiations were continued and documents exchanged by the Diets on both sides.

It was now the turn of the Gotha Representatives and officials to begin to raise up opposition. 'The Assembly of Representatives in Gotha,' Bröhmer was now able to complain on the 14th of June,—'has also the new proposals of the Representatives here in relation to the union affair, and the Ministry there has, as before, remained silent with regard to this refusal, as did the Government Commissioner, and has not made the slightest attempt to make the Representatives show just consideration for the hitherto flourishing sisterland here, which has become poor and unhappy through Gotha.'

During these latter negotiations I was in Schleswig and breathing the fresh air of a national undertaking, the preliminary tragical ending of which I was to see very near. I shall be able to tell of this at the proper time, let it only be said here that in this position also I found myself to a certain degree in opposition to my Ministry.

The greatest difficulties beset me from Coburg and Gotha with regard to the management of my command in the army of Schleswig. The two Ministers worried me continually with the remonstrance that I should not leave my lands during such hard times. And the confusion did indeed increase during my absence. The House quarrels between the class representatives and the officials amongst themselves and with one another had reached the furthest point. The attitude of both Governments with regard to the German question, their relations with the Central Power and the

neighbouring States had completely disturbed the balance of the governing factions, and the reins of power had fallen more and more out of the hands of Herr von Stein in Gotha, as well as of Bröhmer in Coburg.

Under the pressure of the universal German situation fresh conflicts with my Ministers had become unavoidable. Bröhmer showered intensely long epistles on me, expressing the wish and hope that I would return to Coburg as soon as possible. 'This return,' said he, 'is growing more and more necessary, it has now become a pressing demand. Your Highness must surround yourself with a new Ministry. Your Highness must not allow yourself to think that, as I myself shall retire, I wish for this reason to know that the members for Gotha belonging to this administration are also removed.'

As I had, at the same time, to assume a more certain attitude with regard to the German question, this was also opposed by Bröhmer, and he saw himself 'driven to the necessity' on the 3rd of July 1849, 'of most humbly requesting most gracious permission to withdraw from the States Ministry, even before the return of Your Highness.' New fuel for the quarrels between Stein and Bröhmer was at that time supplied by several financial questions, concerning which the latter had reproached the former with every conceivable misuse of official power.

It was now time for me to return home, and to attempt to restore order in home affairs, to which one might apply a word of Metternich's, which we always used in those years with a certain satisfaction and preference, and with which he thought he exculpated his method of government. On my return I did indeed find 'Confusion on all sides' in Coburg and Gotha.

On the 2nd of August I entered Gotha. On account of the troublous times I had, both here and in Coburg, where I arrived later the next evening, forbidden all ceremonies of welcome. All that had happened during the past month could only leave an impression of the deepest pain and the complete overthrow of all rising hopes of the past year, both in the smaller towns as well as in the broad Fatherland.

In order to understand the course of things, one must consider the events in the great centres of Germany since

the beginning of the year 1848, particularly in Frankfort and Berlin. What I had first to relate of my Thuringian mountains and valleys, and of the storms which had spread since the March days into the farthest corners of the forest, were mostly pictures which were of local interest, yet characteristic of the whole period: they were therefore presented to the reader with many individual traits. But I took so great a share during this epoch in the great and universal questions, that I shall now be able to depict them in all their historical connection.

CHAPTER IX

THE PERIOD OF REACTION.—LETTERS TO KING LEOPOLD AND PRINCE ALBERT.—UNIVERSAL SCARE AMONGST THE GOVERNING CLASSES.—PROCLAMATION OF THE CONFEDERATE ASSEMBLY.—METTERNICH'S REAL INTENTIONS.—PROPOSES A MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN DRESDEN; HIS CIRCULAR DESPATCH.—AGREEMENT OF PRUSSIA.—BAVARIA OBJECTS TO DRESDEN.—THE COUNTESS OF LANDSFELD (LOLA MONTEZ) DRIVEN FROM MUNICH.—PRINCE LEININGEN'S ADVICE AS REGARDS THE BAVARIAN HOUSES.—KING LOUIS' ABDICATION.—AGITATION IN THE SMALLER WESTERN STATES.—RIOTS OF THE PEASANTRY.—PRINCE ALBERT—HIS FAVOURABLE VIEWS OF THE REVOLUTION.—HE REFUSES TO BE DISABUSED.—HIS LETTER TO KING LEOPOLD.—SCHEME FOR A UNITED GERMANY.—THE MARCH DAYS IN VIENNA.—FALL OF THE METTERNICH SYSTEM.—METTERNICH'S FLIGHT.—THE KING OF SAXONY AND HIS INSURGENT SUBJECTS.—NEW SAXON MINISTRY.—RISE OF VON DER PFORDTEN.—ATTITUDE OF PRUSSIA.—THE OLD COUNCILLORS REFUSE SERVICE.—FREDERICK WILLIAM EXONERATED FROM CONTEMPORARY CHARGES.—LETTERS TO PRINCE ALBERT.—THE PRINCE'S REPLY.—HIS SYMPATHY WITH FREDERICK WILLIAM.—MISMANAGEMENT OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—WEST GERMANY'S VIEWS OF GERMAN REGENERATION.—POPULAR DEMANDS FOR A REPUBLIC.—THE PARLIAMENTS MEET AT HEIDELBERG.—THE CONFEDERATE ASSEMBLY SUMMONED TO POTSDAM.—THE AUSTRIAN PROHIBITIVE DESPATCH.—THE ASSEMBLY ABANDONED.—PRINCE ALBERT'S ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE THE DUKE'S VIEWS AS TO A CENTRAL POWER.—THE DUKE'S OBJECTIONS TO PRUSSIA.—THE FRANKFORT TENDENCY.—FREDERICK WILLIAM PROPOSED AS HEAD OF THE CONFEDERATION.—PRINCE ALBERT'S MEMORIAL OF THE 28TH MARCH.—HIS SCHEME FOR GERMAN UNITY.—FREDERICK WILLIAM'S OBJECTIONS.—THE COMMITTEE OF SEVENTEEN PROXIES IN FRANKFORT.—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE DUKE AND PRINCE ALBERT AS TO UNIVERSAL GERMAN RELATIONS.—THE BILL OF THE SEVENTEEN.—PRINCE ALBERT'S CRITICISMS DISCOURAGE THE COMMITTEE.—ANTICIPATED DISRUPTION OF AUSTRIA.—THE DUKE'S VIEWS AS TO THE PROPER ACTION OF THE GERMAN PRINCES.

DURING the period of reaction, after the year 1850, people tried on all sides to prove how little the German States which

had adopted constitutional laws had been furnished by this circumstance with even the smallest protection against the Revolution of 1848.

In many places this observation was happily applied to the constitutional system; this argument was rendered applicable particularly with regard to those who were fond of referring to Belgium or England, and who declared that the peace and quiet in those countries during the revolutionary years was owing to their institutions.

It may be understood that I do not intend to enter here into a general political discussion, nor to investigate the question whether the consequences of the Paris Revolution might have been avoided in Germany if a constitutional system of Government had been honourably maintained in the States of Central Europe, as in England, Holland and Belgium. It is a fact that, during the storms of the year 1848, there existed a kind of consolation and satisfaction for most liberal-minded men in the quiet deportment of the really constitutional countries; and I wrote more than once in this sense to King Leopold and to Prince Albert (12th April 1848):

'Our only moral support is Belgium, for she furnishes a proof that monarchy can exist with liberal institutions, and at the same time forms a sure guarantee against anarchy. We feel all this quite plainly, and this view has also penetrated through the people.'

With reference to my own experiences, the decision concerning the worth of my constitutional principles was made difficult enough to me; as has been shown in the preceding chapter, I had two lands to attend to, of which one had long since possessed its representative constitution, and the other its old-fashioned regulations, but one could not have said afterwards that the difference between the agitations on the one side and the other was very great. Nevertheless, I may say, that State authority was never entirely lost in my little Duchies.

When, however, the reproach is made by the reactionary side of the German Governments that instead of temporising and yielding during the unhappy March days, strength alone should have been seriously resorted to, they forget that this

strength was in the hands of men who were oppressed and uncertain in their own consciences, through that very neglect of timely constitutional demands.

The worst thing everywhere in the large as well as the small States was, as I wrote to my brother on the 25th of March in regard to many German Princes, in a jesting tone, but with a correct view of the situation, 'The poor sovereigns boasted of their sentiments as anti-liberal; but when it came to action, they simply made wry faces; under cover of this they are all full of reactionary ideas, as may be seen at the first glance.'

The universal fright which suddenly seized the governing classes in Germany, really took its origin in the German Diet itself. It was peculiarly ghostlike, when this instrument of obdurate reaction all at once began to sing liberal and national airs.

On the first of March the Confederate Assembly had sent out a proclamation in which Princes and Nations were called upon to unite in concord; all the Governments were conscious of their duties in the face of the dangers of the time. The German Diet intended to take the demands of the national interests and the national life courageously into its own hands.

People inquired with surprise whence came this altered speech, and what intentions the two great Powers had; and, as they did not like to hint at the worst, the measures of the German Diet were regarded solely as a consequence of the fear of revolution. Metternich really only wished to make a slight evolution in the ideas popular in Germany, in order better to secure the help of the German Confederacy for himself and Austria.

In the Paris Revolution he had seen only the beginning of a movement against Italy: he thought that the Milan demonstrations against Austria and the agitations in the Papal territory hung together immediately with the event in Paris, and he expected that the French would soon break into Italy.

Old habit of thought and the differences with the Sardinian and Papal Governments necessarily fixed the gaze of the Austrian States Chancellor on the German States, the only reserve which could be looked forward to, in case it came to

warlike complications. The old Austrian method of calling upon the Holy Roman Kingdom in Franco-Italian cases of need, was to be used once more, and it succeeded in arousing cheerfulness in Germany. People resigned themselves to the astonishing address of the German Diet to the German people, and hardly seemed to guess that a real fire was already burning here, on which oil was being poured.

Although the old Prince always insisted that he had foreseen everything, yet nothing is more certain than that during the first week in March he had no real knowledge of the seething state of Germany, or underestimated it. He negotiated with Prussia concerning the military measures to be adopted against the French Revolution, he let public newspapers emphasize the idea of Confederate reform in the individual States of Germany and in that of the Austrian Government. Finally, he brought forward the unexpected, bold proposal for a Ministerial Conference in Dresden, which was to meet the wants of the times.

A circular despatch which was addressed to the German Governments on the 7th of March 1848, may be said to have pretty well represented Metternich's swan song, and it was a strange closing commentary to all that had been neglected during the past thirty years. It runs thus:

'As regards the pregnant occurrences which have just transpired in France, and the dangers arising therefrom to Germany, the German Confederate Assembly have certainly adopted the first measures offered by the situation.

'Further communications concerning the most powerful defence of the German Confederate territories against that attack from outside will shortly be made to the Confederate Assembly by the two Courts of Vienna and Berlin, and doubtless be brought to a decision there at once. By this means these Courts do not, however, for a moment imagine that they have exhausted the measure of their duties which they owe in this decisive moment to the universal Fatherland.

'The efforts of the united forces of this Fatherland, the deepest union of the different races of Germany, as well as their princes and peoples will be needed in order to preserve for ourselves and our successors the independence, the

freedom and the highest possessions which are offered by human beings.

In such a state of things, the fortifying of the national link, which surrounds all parts of Germany, the strengthening of the spirit of the Fatherland by means of the guaranteeing of property, which all Germans enjoy and are to enjoy under the protection of the Confederation—the granting of the just wishes of the nation, in a word, in so far as this is compatible with the maintenance of the rights of the Crown and the true welfare of the people—are matters which must be at once kept in sight, and concerning which Germany's princes and towns must at once come to a decision.

'We propose, in company with Prussia, on behalf of such a consultation, the immediate assembling of a Congress of Ministers. This would have to take place during the next few weeks and in Dresden. Each one of the seventeen voices in the close council of the German Confederacy would be represented at the Congress by a plenipotentiary. The programme of the points to be brought under discussion, as well as that for its opening on a fixed day, will shortly be given to your Confederate allies by us in company with Prussia. The task set the Congress would be the drawing up of rules and leading principles, the execution of which would then be the affair of the Confederate Assembly. In the meantime, will Your . . . inform the Government by which you are accredited, of our views and invite them at once to agree with the united Governments concerning the choice of the plenipotentiaries to be sent to Dresden, and to supply us with information concerning the same.

'The feeling which we presuppose all our allies to entertain, that help as speedy as it is efficacious must at once be given against these dangers which beset the Fatherland, this feeling is guarantee to us for the joyful readiness with which all the Governments of Germany will meet the proposal made by Prussia and ourselves. Accept, etc.'

In the eleventh hour before the outbreak of the volcano, the Austrian Government thought that they could once more succeed in supporting the German princes with the old fashioned means of their policy, but even if individual ones amongst them had been inclined to consent to the renewed force

of the Conference, yet from the wide masses of the people to the highest educated classes all confidence had been lost. The liberal drapery of the old German Diet no longer deceived them, and the empty phrases in their toothless mouths really worked exhilaratingly for the Revolution.

Prussia had, it is true in all honesty, made herself a party to this last phase of Metternich's policy, but she nevertheless expected some concessions with regard to her position in Germany and in the affairs of the Confederacy. Accustomed to expect all improvements of her position from the complaisance of Austria, she hoped by means of good services rendered, in case of a Franco-Italian complication to obtain a few slight advantages. But Frederick William IV was not thinking of anything more than perhaps the change in the Presidency of the German Diet. Besides, in Berlin Government circles many national attacks and turns of speech were made, and the Prussian journals soon delivered the watchword of the German United State instead of the States Union.

With regard to this, however, on the 12th of March a circular note was issued by Bavaria, who flatly declared herself against the useless Ministerial Conferences and particularly in Dresden, as being too far off. The despatch pretended that conferences of this kind could only serve as reminders of 'Carlsbad, Verona and Vienna:

'The King has the intention of willingly co-operating in everything which can promote the great aim of the national strengthening of Germany; but in the true, benevolent interests of the Governments as well as of those who govern, he can only consent to take part in the councils concerning German questions in case the consultation takes place in a form befitting the German Diet, and the results of the council are, it is to be hoped, incorporated with the Confederate Protocols about to be published.'

Prince Metternich was no longer in a position to answer the Bavarian circular note, and in Prussia also entirely different hands were already busied with the further development of the German question. Even in the first weeks of March no one either in Vienna or in Berlin had expected so quick a fall of the machine of State. People were greatly inclined to attribute the events in the smaller States to local

or special Court relations; in the large States, on the contrary, it seemed as if the fidelity and surety of the armies must necessarily provide a certain protection against the revolution.

Meanwhile, the example of Bavaria would have shown how easily, in those days, special and local relations gave rise to universal changes, and small causes produced great effects. The removal of the unfortunate Countess Landsfeld appeared to have wiped out the personal discord between the King and his people of Munich, but since the 2nd of March the agitation had assumed a purely revolutionary character. The removal of Minister Beck was demanded, and on the 4th and the 6th of March matters culminated in an open uproar, which was only quelled by the extensive concessions of the King.

My cousin, Prince Leiningen, had already advised the King on the 2nd of March to anticipate the agitation, and to summon the Houses. This promise was now forcibly extorted from the King, and he had to declare that the Houses would be opened on the 16th of March. With regard to Prince Leiningen, Wrede had known how to convince the King that he ought to rely entirely upon the troops. But when the riots of the 4th and 6th of March occurred no one seriously thought of really striking, and the consequences were, as was later to be so disastrous everywhere, that the rabble imagined they had gained a great victory over the 'King's mercenaries.' In Munich, this mad idea which had sprung up during the March days amongst the lower classes concerning the military power of Princes, was as in all German towns, particularly the larger ones, the real source of all the evils which followed.

The so-called binding by oath of the military might be said to have been the confirmation of the supposed triumph of the people as regarded the Constitution which King Louis, as one of the first Princes in Germany, had abolished on the 6th of March. At the same time the Ministry of Wallerstein was dismissed, without there being any possibility of substituting even a single one of the Prince's followers. Bavaria was really without any Government at all for several days, until Count Waldkirch came to Munich, having been summoned from Carlsruhe to assume the control of the Ministry.

Thus everything had begun to fluctuate during the past

few days, and the King found himself in an almost desperate position, in which the thought of abdication grew ever stronger and more assertive. Since the Lola episode he had had to endure great inward struggles and the most indescribable anger and grief. For this unfortunate affair had undermined the peace of his own House and family, far more than might have been seen from the sanguine nature of the intellectual and good-hearted King.

When, on the 16th of March the rumour of the presence of Countess Landsfeld in Munich gave rise to fresh disturbances, even in the most intimate Court circles people hesitated to tell one another that the King had had a long conversation with Countess Landsfeld in the police office buildings.

All these circumstances united in making the King decide to relinquish the Government. The people, having heard the rumour that he had this intention, at once seized upon the idea of compulsory abdication. Quiet was only restored when Louis himself assured a deputation of citizens that no outside influence whatever had affected his decision.

With regard to the political revolution which had just taken place, one might say generally that Countess Landsfeld, or her party, had forced the King in a direction which made the position of Bavaria in Germany so much to be desired by him appear possible of attainment.

But the course of events had become entirely unbearable and disastrous to King Louis on two sides.

The new relations which the kingly power was to assume towards the responsible Ministers of State appeared just as unacceptable to the King as the dependent position in which Bavaria threatened to fall with regard to the German unity, which was everywhere insisted upon. In both respects the tendencies which even such persons as the Princes Leiningen and Wallerstein exhibited, were deeply hated by the King. When Leiningen's letters to the King were published in a pamphlet, the King gave expression to his indignation at the disastrous leaning of the times towards bringing State matters into publicity, in the strongest words against Prince Wallerstein. In the King's autograph letter to the latter,—at least such was the information given us, without my being able exactly to warrant it,—there was even a passage

to the effect that 'the King had, moreover, never had the slightest confidence in the Prince.'

The Government of Maximilian II announced itself as strictly constitutional. A bill for the responsibility of the Ministers was made public. The Diet which King Louis had summoned on the 23rd was opened by his successor.

Meantime the agitations in the smaller Western States if not so stormy, had been of no less consequence than in Bavaria. In Baden, on the 1st of March, a kind of storming petition was handed into the Assembly, only just opened, by a deputation from Mannheim, the twelve points of which were consented to by the Ministry. The tendency of the movement was chiefly in the direction of the universal German questions, which will soon be spoken of.

In Würtemberg the King first showed a desire to oppose the demands of the masses. At length on the 9th of March he appointed a Ministry from amongst the hitherto chief opposition party in the Diet. In the Grand Duchy of Hesse the influence of Mainz, which from the beginning had been one of the chief centres of revolution, made itself felt. The Grand Duke took his son, the successor to the throne Louis III, as a co-regent, on the 5th of March, and Heinrich von Gagern was placed at the head of the Ministry.

In Nassau the confusion was so complete, that not only were all possible and impossible concessions made at the first scare, but all the crown-lands were at once given up also. The amusing anecdote was told of the then Minister Count von Dungern, that he himself had given the order to make the railroad impassable, so that no Confederate troops could come to his aid.

In the Electorate of Hesse, the revolution assumed, in the year 1848, as in the year 1831, a peculiarly sharply defined personal character. Whereas political demands were much more moderate than in many small States, the people rose against the person of the Elector with expressions which had never until then been heard in Germany.

In Hanau a provisory Government had been formed, which sent an ultimatum to the Elector, in which it was said that he must submit within three days, for not only his Government was suspected, but himself personally also. On

the 10th of March everything was granted which the people of Hanau demanded; the Elector capitulated, but with the firm intention of taking back his promises on the first opportunity.

In Oldenburg and Brunswick the usual concessions were wrung from the Princes by means of tumultuous scenes during the week between the 3rd and the 10th of March, and the same was done with the town magistrates in Hamburg, Frankfort and Bremen.

No timely concessions anywhere; everywhere the expectation of injurious tumults and the wild cries of the so-called people. Herein lay the really shameful and demoralising future of the German agitation, through which, even in the smallest places, all official authority was completely undermined during the following months. The matter was still worse in some parts of Upper Germany, where the peasants followed the example of the town riots still more roughly, and seized the property of the nobility. The Frankish nobility particularly suffered in this way, and unfortunately no help or support whatever could be given by the Governments against the wanton and barbarous devastation of their property.

People imagined themselves to be going through the Peasant's War of 1525. But things of this kind had to happen, in order to open the eyes which did not seem to recognise the deep revolutionary meaning of events. My brother in England also appeared greatly inclined to picture the disturbances in Germany much more favourably, and to underestimate the social difficulties which had arisen so threateningly.

My brother had welcomed the beginning of the German agitation almost with enthusiasm, and the optimistic academic manner in which he at first handled the matter was shown in a letter of the 14th of March in the most remarkable way.

'In Germany,'—thus it ran—'it looks gloomy, yet I have not lost the hope that when the first outbreak is over, as some of the things neglected by the Governments have been set right, a plainer recognition of the right course will be arrived at. The proofs of devotion to the Princes and their Houses are surely not to be despised, and the striving for German

unity is worthy of praise. It is to be deplored that the excitement in Germany makes it impossible for thinking Germans to follow the Paris experiment with undivided attention.

'It is one of the most remarkable plays which history has ever offered us, and full of useful teaching for all statesmen and those skilled in State affairs. One thus rightly sees how the bold interference of the madly confident human hand in the wheels of the social machine, which is propelled more by natural forces and according to natural laws, all through human wisdom, disturbs the machine and unchains all the natural forces against society. The circle is growing narrower and narrower, and the catastrophe is approaching visibly. An outbreak in Germany can hardly be avoided; and God help the Germans, when they too have sinned against nature, and are not united.'

Even the shocks which now occurred in Vienna and Berlin could not cloud my brother's bright hopes. He even wrote to my uncle on the 21st of March, as follows:

'Since then a fresh catastrophe has occurred: in Vienna! Metternich wanders about a fugitive! Shocking as is such a destruction of a system which has existed so long, and much as one must tremble at the excesses, yet I see in these events the saving of Germany and of Italy also. In Germany the confidence of the people will again be given to the Princes, who are now no longer moved by secret influences to play false, to give much and secretly take it back again; it will place the King of Prussia on his feet, and obviate the impossibility of uniting constitutional and absolute States in a confederacy for political universal work.

'In Italy the pretext of Austrian aggression will fall to the ground, and even Lombardy will obtain that for the possession of which she wished to tear herself away from Austria.

'What is now occurring in Berlin is highly important, unfortunately our news is abruptly ended with a fight in the streets; God grant that the King has remained victorious at least in the streets! Russia's influence over Germany has now pretty well ceased to be, and this pressure on the Governments, this suspicion of the populace has, at least, been

removed. I imagine that the new state of things will be as follows: Austrian provincial representative chambers in Bohemia, Moravia, Tyrol, Austria, Carniola, Steyermark, Venice, Lombardy—a united Diet in Vienna, after the pattern of the Prussian one. An entirely modern constitution in Hungary. A popularly organised German Confederation with German Representative Parliaments, an administration of the Empire alternating between Austria and Prussia (with certain executive prerogatives), tolls-union for all Germany.

'When this is organised and appears good, an imitation of the same in Italy, an Italian Confederate and tolls-union, into which Austria will also enter with her provinces there; Austria's power making her the centre of gravity in both State Confederations and thus the connecting link between the two. The whole centre of Europe reduced to a single conservative mass, which keeps the Asiatic barbarian within bounds, as well as the restless mischief-maker, the Gaul: Modern, constitutional, industrial realisation of the middle-age idea of the Holy Roman Kingdom.'

In those days of disturbance and the unceasing necessities of the moment, seldom has a greater, and, if one will, clearer political fancy-organisation been painted by a politically thoughtful and influential man than the above; for my part, however, I was convinced that, even if the primary idea of a political system, such as my brother thought of, might be attractive enough, there was no immediate prospect of its realisation.

The revolution in the large States of Germany, of whose future my brother thought he could paint so hopeful a picture in the above letter, by no means justified his prophecies. As regarded Austria first of all, the shocks given to the old Hapsburg alliance were much more destructive to the country than Prince Albert imagined. From the first moment of the agitation a tendency towards complete dissolution showed itself in the heterogeneous masses of the formerly independent kingdoms and nationalities. The existence of the monarchy was more than doubtful, and the Austrian funds and notes at once suffered a depreciation such as had not been heard of since the Napoleonic wars in Europe.

Even the agitation of the March days bore in the beginning,

in Vienna, more the character of a Court and Palace Revolution than that of a rising of the people; for the first time after the overthrow of the existing Government were people alienated from all political matters, driven to a revolutionary behaviour, which was kept up particularly by the Italians, Hungarians and Poles. Amidst the noise of the academic school youth, the working classes and the street rabble, which the most different Ministries could not succeed in mastering, the unfortunate source of the Vienna revolution was almost entirely forgotten, and is not entirely recognised, in all its simplicity, even at this date.

The mysterious reason of the fall of the Metternich system in Austria, lay chiefly in the fact that the old Chancellor was striving until the end to extinguish the revolutionary brands all over Europe, and hardly noticed that he was immediately threatened with dangers in the old historical citadel itself. As is known, the guardian government of the Emperor Ferdinand, the triumvirate Metternich, Kolowrat and the Archduke Louis had already for years past maintained themselves only with the greatest trouble, against the Court party which gathered more around the Archduchess Sophia.

As in the kingdom the extraordinary case occurred that a Regency performed the functions of a monarch incapable of governing, without its being authorised by any State law, parliamentary recognition, or any public act whatever, it was not very difficult to bring about the overthrow of the system. Amongst the general public there was hardly any correct knowledge of the duration of this Regency, and, as the monarch was still capable of writing his name, the fiction of Ferdinand's Government was continued until the moment when the Imperial family itself strove to bring about a change in this Government. In the Council of Three, however, considerable differences had already arisen since the outbreak of the Italian movement, and unity was no longer to be attained in the handling of the internal questions regarding Hungary, Poland and Bohemia.

With Metternich's flight and the driving away of the entirely innocent burgomaster from Vienna, all laws of order were cast aside; complete anarchy, at first good-natured, set in. Nevertheless the revolutionary agitation stopped signifi-

cantly before the name of the Emperor and the person of the childish monarch. The vain game with institutions and government programmes which was played during the next few weeks between poor Ferdinand and the burghers, who were, on the whole, inclined to cling to patriarchal customs, at least insured the monarchy against the more serious attacks of the provinces.

One had to be content with maintaining the central point in an upright position, and thus the original plans for the change of throne were put off until a more fitting time.

The main points of the administration were once more brought together by an old bureaucrat who fortunately happened to be popular at the moment, and the Chancery of State was far too lazy for the quick change in the successors of the powerful prince of ancient diplomacy, to be able to make any great alteration in the external relations of the Hapsburg-Lothringian *hausmacht.*

Fiquelmont, Lebzeltern, Wessenberg, threw themselves all three with great vehemence into the German question and adopted as their chief task the maintenance of the doctrine of the departed master; to allow everything to happen sooner and rather than a strengthening of the Prussian power in the Confederate kingdom of Central Europe.

One of the most remarkable consequences of the events in Vienna was their reaction on the German States themselves. The overthrow of the system in Austria, in which so many German Governments had seen their only reserve, robbed the Conservative forces in the smaller States of their last hope and remaining courage. Only now did the revolutionary Philistinism of the small residences find itself quite drunk with victory, now that the feared master of the German Confederate police could no longer be dangerous from his safe corner on the Danube.

Thus in Saxony also the proper self-confidence with which the King opposed the pressure of the rioters for nearly fourteen days was shaken by the news of the occurrences in Vienna. The Leipzig demonstrations during the first days of March were courageously repulsed by the King, and nothing appeared to be able to turn him from the decision to permit reforms only when made by lawful parliamentary negotiations. But

the demand for the complete abolishment of the censorship was too well founded for anyone to wish to wait for the decision of the Assembly. On the 6th of March Minister von Falckelstein sent in his resignation, but in the King's proclamation of the same day the summoning of Parliament was promised for the 1st of May. A Press Bill would then be laid before it. The King thought he might still be able to work by means of exhortation, and requested that the confidence refused him should not be made a reason for acting before it had been warranted by the self-constituted representatives.

But the formation of a new Ministry could not be delayed until the assembly of parliament, and a reconstruction of the old one under the Presidency of Könneritz and von Wietersheim, who were retained, belonged to the impossibilities, unless they were prepared to maintain peace and quiet in Leipzig and Dresden by main force. The King thus saw himself forced in a few days to go more and more to the left, and to seek new councillors for his crown. At length, on the 16th of March the Braun Ministry was formed, which contained in itself all shades of opposition even to the radical Oberländ, and which from the first moment abandoned the constitutional path marked out by the King, in order to warrant to the land, by means of grants, every possible freedom according to the usual custom of the strange times until the end of March.

The War Minister in the new Cabinet was Colonel von Rabenhorst, the same who, as I showed in the preceding chapter, had assumed as his task the union of the Saxon and Thuringian armies. The Leipzig Professor von der Pfordten had begun his political career with him in this Ministry, a career which he afterwards continued in Bavaria, and which became important and pregnant for universal German affairs. He had, as they said in Leipzig, in no way pushed himself forward during the March days, and not being a Saxon he was timid about mixing himself up in the external affairs of the country.

It is said to have been a pure accident that, as the Rector was not able to get it ready owing to the calls on his time, the drawing up of this address presented by the University to the King was given over to him, and resolved upon by the Senate on the 3rd of March. This circumstance was decisive

for von der Pfordten's future; for it caused him to be known at Court and amongst the people, and he was not allowed to be absent from the Liberal Ministry of the 16th of March.

A peculiar chain of circumstances had prevented Herr von Beust, who was then Ambassador in London, from undertaking the Foreign Ministry; the King had really intended him for this and summoned him to Dresden. But Herr von der Pfordten had taken his place with suddenly acquired popularity, and six months later, in the spring of the year 1850, worked in unison with him to destroy the last hopes of the unity of Germany. Such were the peculiar paths which were marked out for the most aspiring and energetic men of the next ten years through the Revolution of 1848. That the two statesmen who most greatly hindered the progress of the idea of German unity should reveal themselves in Saxony, of all countries, where they did not seem to be able to advance radically enough, was, after a short time, a patent surprise which no one had certainly foreseen less than the frank and honourable King Frederick Augustus.

Meanwhile Germany's immediate future depended on Berlin; the form which affairs would take there, must necessarily be decisive, considering the fact that everything was uncertain. Hence the strained attention with which all thoughtful politicians watched the King. In the circle immediately surrounding me, as amongst my relations, there was a feeling of the utmost confidence. Prussia's attitude appeared to assume a particularly favourable aspect, as Berlin remained tolerably quiet during the first two weeks in March, and it looked as if the King had everything in his own hands. On the 6th of March he closed the session of the united committees, and took occasion to speak of the periodicity of the United Diet in the most unconstrained manner as a matter founded on the nature of the institution.

In the provinces, particularly in Cologne, a few disturbances of the peace had, it is true, occurred, which were followed by similar ones in Breslau, Magdeburg, Königsberg, but the addresses which had been received by the authorities of these and other towns had been sent to Berlin, were contained within narrow limits, and with the exception of Königsberg, matters assumed nowhere a dangerous character.

Nevertheless the Ministry lost all self-possession at these most insignificant agitations. They neither ventured upon energetic measures nor could they decide to make any concessions. The demand of freedom for the Press, was yielded to in principle, in a most unfortunate Cabinet order of the 8th of March, whereas its execution was prevented by a postponement, until the Confederate Press law could be established.

During these days the King exhausted himself in endless speeches to the different deputations. The Berlin 'Magistrate' published some of these Royal words, and yet one could only wonder at hearing so many theoretic explanations from the highest office at such a pressing time. There was again a talk of the innate steadfastness of the German nature, there should a course and an aim have been pointed out with the words 'free Princes, free people,' with mottoes like 'Bold and Discreet,' so that they could not be mistaken, even if they only slightly touched upon the plainly marked grooves of the Prussian administration.

Under these circumstances the old councillors positively refused service. The androgynal creatures in whom the King reposed confidence, who, with their partial piety and partial liberalism had supported all half-measures of the State since 1840, suddenly found themselves too weak, and counselled him to make concessions which they were nevertheless not willing to answer for. They thought it right to propose others who could undertake to carry out the new order of things. For, in order to please the Royal Sovereign and act according to his views and to be able, nevertheless, to say, at the same time, that they had early advised the necessity of reform, they tendered their resignation at the most difficult moment, and the King privately consented. Thus, there was actually no Government in Prussia on the important day of the 18th of March, and the King stood alone, and found himself in a position which was really unique of its kind and only too calculated to give rise to misunderstandings of every description.

One feels moved, when casting a backward glance historically at this unhappy time to exonerate Frederick William IV in some degree from the charges which contemporaries and particularly the military have heaped upon him. It

remained enigmatical to me also what relation it could have to the order for the retreat of the troops, after they had been completely victorious.

The little knowledge which I was able to gain on the subject, I imparted to my brother in several letters during the month of March 1848.

'*Gotha, March 20th.*

'Alvensleben has just returned from Berlin, where he witnessed the most frightful events! The last capital of Germany has now fallen a prey to the Ultra-Liberal principle. The monarchy there has *lost* the last battle. "Who will not hear, must feel," remains a true proverb. It is uncertain as yet, whether the King will be able to hold his position. He had yielded, and wished to fight again afterwards; blood has flowed in streams; the troops fought like lions, as did the burghers, I may say like knights, for the burghers threw themselves on the troops without anger, and, after the battle had lasted for two days without being decided, they accompanied the troops with rejoicings when the King sent them out of the city. The city was illuminated yesterday.

'King and kingdom have surrendered themselves to the mercy or the mercilessness of the armed mass of the people, and what orders and decisions they make will now depend upon their generosity. Until now there has been much to be done in order *perhaps* to check the revolution in union with the Liberals and all well-intentioned men.'

'*March 25th.*

'The situation in Berlin threatens the greatest dangers. The King wishes to place himself at the head and will give way, in order not to be immediately thrown overboard; but he will never serve the German matter honestly.

'All this makes us fear that he is the man for the Ultra-Radicals, who are numerous and powerful, who are desirous completely to overthrow all orderly relations, and are entirely anti-constitutional: they use him in order to unseat us quiet Liberals, and particularly all Princes, and will then drop him at the proper time. We shall then naturally fall with him, and relations will be established like those in Switzerland,

which is very satisfactory to people in general. This fear is universal, and we are approaching a very dangerous period. If you are able to use your influence, do so, try particularly to find out what the King's design is. Everyone is saying that, in order to secure himself, he is thinking of sacrificing us small Princes. Public opinion is at present entirely against him.'

My brother, on the contrary, would not allow his confidence in the King to be shaken, and it will be of interest to hear his answer, at least in some characteristic principal points:

'*Buckingham Palace, March 30th.*

'I have received two welcome letters from you, for which I heartily thank you. Although the excitement in Germany must still be very great, and the situation in Europe is becoming more and more complicated, yet it looks as if Germany wished once more to become consolidated. I do not understand why the King of Prussia's manner of acting does not meet with your approbation. He alone has done what was left to be done, and thereby rendered Germany an immense service. The new Germany will and must be reformed, and if an important German Prince does not undertake it, the work will fall into the hands of clubs, unions, professors, theoreticians, swindlers; and if the work be not soon begun, democracy will run away with it. Without an Emperor as Chief Head, a Republic will arise, and the final solution will be a state of things such as exists in America or in Switzerland.

'I have also given myself the task of working out a constitutional plan, which gives me more guarantees for a good future than the Heidelberger with his Parliament of ninety, imitated from the Paris Constituent Assembly. If it pleases you, adopt it and try to support it as much as possible; it will be of aid in producing some quick result. I have also sent it to Berlin, Vienna, Dresden, Munich, etc. Do all you can for it.

'*P.S.*—The poor Prince of Prussia is greatly to be pitied at being under a cloud and most unjustly, for he is frankly trying to bring about a new state of things.

'*P.S.*—(2) A few more words. I have just received your welcome letter of the 25th. I again find want of confidence in the King of Prussia. I can assure you that I see in the King's character the greatest guarantees for the safety of the other sovereigns. He has committed most of his political faults out of regard for the scruples which he entertains for Austria and the other sovereigns, and safety is to be sought only in his energetic march forward; hence the rage of the Radicals about it. Their chief trick will be to keep the Princes separated by means of petty considerations and thus weaken them. For God's sake do not let yourselves be caught in this trap. Your sovereignity would be most endangered in this way, and would at length succumb to a republic. Preach this right and left.'

As may be seen from the foregoing letters and many others besides, to which I shall presently return, my brother had entirely identified Prussian affairs and events with those of Germany. He could hardly believe that King Frederick William had made his decisions during the most eventful days in March from any other point of view, than that of the work of the German Union. In this view he was partly, like all the world, confirmed by the appearance of things after the retirement of the troops from Berlin.

As is known, Frederick William IV had already announced before the outbreak of the Revolution that he was on the point of making proposals for the regeneration of the Confederacy; but the remarkable words which seemed to be the most flagrant contradiction of facts, and according to which the King declared himself ready to undertake the direction and management of Germany, only appeared on the 21st of March. If he now said that Prussia should 'be absorbed' in Germany, one saw in this speech only the cry of a stricken man, and for the same reason, arose the old Prussian feeling against a national idea, which had been invoked for deliverance.

When Heinrich von Arnim who was now appointed to a place in the Ministry formed by Count Arnim-Boitzenburg afterwards asserted * that the King's proclamation of the

* Frankfort and Berlin, p. 18. Stockmar Denkwürdigkeiten, p. 457.

21st of March 'had been received by the remainder of Germany with sneers and contempt, and that Germany was therefore not yet ripe for such thoughts,' this does not, as is seen from my letter introduced above, fully suit the case.

They heaped scorn on the King riding about with the black, red and yellow flag, because they noticed that he did this at a moment when he had lost all the power which he had not known how to use when he still possessed it.

If Stockmar himself, to whom the admission was intolerably hard, at that time owned that the King had mismanaged in every way, yet it certainly must not be said that the other Germans were not ripe for the unity of Germany.

The change of popular opinion in Prussian concerns was then complete, even in the nearest States and territories. Everything turned away from the northern sun in order to hail the star of the national regeneration, highly doubtful as it was, which had risen in the south-west.

In the West of Germany, where they still lived amongst the traditions of the old German kingdom, where they still cherished memories of the old centres of Frankish and Suabian Imperial Power, they could not think otherwise than that the regeneration of Germany must be accomplished in the most thorough manner, and that the people and Assemblies of these peculiar provinces of the Empire were first of all called upon to bring about the national reorganisation.

But the ideas which were diffused from here concerning the restoration of the Central Power were of so misty and uncertain a character, that one could hardly form an idea of how such a kingdom was really to exist with provincial parliaments which claimed the most unlimited rights of legislation.

In the individual States they would not hear of reservations in favour of the Confederate legislature, and I myself had made the experience in my own Duchies that the expressions of faithfulness to the Confederation were exactly what gave the best satisfaction in my proclamations. They wanted everything arrived at and settled in a moment, and as regarded the German kingdom, the larger number of national-minded Germans pictured to themselves some kind of a

republican organisation in the visionary form of old Imperial memories.

I do not know whether the anecdote so often related of those days which tells of the demand of the people for a Republic was founded on some actual event with the Grand-Duke, but according to this the thoughts of most of them were really fixed on Germany in a form of which the more closely united Fatherlands had thought with all the penetration of independent constitutional monarchies, but the German Empire as a whole was only represented as a republican ideal.

The assembling of the members of the German Parliaments at Heidelberg brought about by Römer and Itzstein took place on the 5th of March. The first declarations of the German Diet, regarding the German reform, followed on the days included between the 6th and the 10th of March, and the German proclamation of the King of Prussia on the 18th of the same month. The Heidelberg tendency, as is known, made itself felt in the preliminary parliament in Frankfort, which sat from the 31st of March until the 3rd of April, and instituted the Committee of Fifty. The German Diet strengthened itself during the interval with the proxies of the Seventeen, and reformed its ranks with men of liberal and popular views.

In Berlin, on the other hand, the greatest efforts were made in order to identify the national movement with Prussia's endeavours, and it really looked for a moment as if the ideas to which Radowitz had for years been trying to win the King over, had some prospect of being realised. As the invitation jointly issued by Austria and Prussia, to attend the Conferences in Dresden had found no acceptance, the happy idea had occurred to them in Berlin to summon the Confederate Assembly to Potsdam, and it is one of the most remarkable facts of history, now entirely forgotten, that Austria really signified her full consent to this measure during the March days. Count Colloredo, as President of the German Diet, had already received an order from his Government to close the sessions in Frankfort and to proceed to Potsdam, whither, as they expressed it in the despatch, the German Diet would be temporarily transferred.

But before the Conferences in Potsdam could be opened, an

extraordinary change had taken place in Austrian politics, and they rose against Prussia's proposals with the same decision as they had previously shown in agreeing to them. The order given the President of the German Diet to go to Potsdam was recalled, and in a circular despatch of the 24th of March, distrust was sown and opposition raised against all Prussian intentions.

'It is true,' said the despatch, 'that we readily agreed to the King of Prussia's idea of removing the German Diet for a time to Potsdam, but in this we only wished to continue the existing state of things.'—'However,' remarked the Austrian Minister verbally, 'since the sending off of circular relating to this case, the Proclamation of the 21st of March, made by His Royal Prussian Majesty, has come to our knowledge through the public papers.

'This substantially alters the situation in our eyes. If no communication has up to the present been made to us concerning the immediate consequence and development which will be given to the ideas mentioned from a Royal Prussian direction,—as well as the form in which its realisation is to follow, and we afterwards, as is but right, reserve our full verdict, yet so much is already assured to us, that no revision, but a complete reformation of the existing state of things may be contemplated, and this not by means of free and conventional, but partially arbitrary precedence.

'Under these circumstances His Majesty the Emperor is more decided than ever to hold fast the basis of the agreement which Your Highness's reigning ancestors now asleep in God made on the 8th of July 1815 with Germany's Princes and free towns; and which, though altered and improved by universal consent, cannot, however, be partially cancelled by lawful means.

'The existing alliance is—whatever its admitted defects and wants may be—still the Palladium of German unity and German strength against foreign countries. No Prince can be found in Germany who is desirous of shaking off this holy bond.

'The city of Frankfort is according to Article 9 of the Act of Confederacy, the seat of the Confederate Assembly. Only in Frankfort, and only in the Confederate Assembly which

meets there according to existing Confederate laws, will the Imperial presiding envoy take part in the transactions which will decide the institution of the work of revision, and the form under which it is to be accomplished, but withdraws at once from any other partially and irregularly conducted negotiation, and to reserve anything further for His Majesty the Emperor.

'Germany ought and must be renovated, this is Austria's decided desire and firm intention in her present attitude. But we have an equally unalterable conviction that this high aim is only to be attained by legitimate means and with the co-operation of all.

Will your . . . . acquaint the Government which you represent with this our determination. They will certainly not fail to do justice to the mind, faithful to the Confederation and the Fatherland, with which they are delivered, and will, as heretofore, attach themselves willingly to the Imperial Court which desires nothing for itself, only *equal rights*, and —by means of united forces—an equal protection for *all* of the constituent parts of our great, glorious German Fatherland.'

Under these circumstances it was found necessary in Berlin to give up the Potsdam Assembly; but it was by no means thought on this account that the Prussian plans for a thorough reorganisation of the Confederation would have to be given up. The presence of a number of plenipotentiaries and Ministers of German States was taken advantage of in order to prevent free conferences, concerning which the Ministry sent circumstantial instructions in a circular despatch of the 27th of March, and in which a programme of German development officially accepted by Prussia appeared, for the realisation of which unfortunately only a decided royal will was wanting.

At the Berlin Conferences Würtemberg, Saxony, Baden, Darmstadt and Nassau were represented; amongst the plenipotentiaries Gagern already at that time enjoyed the greatest consideration, and in his co-operation people saw a warrant for the carrying into execution of the Prussian programme in the Assemblies of the individual States. Although the decisions of the Conference were communicated

in the modest form of questions, yet the greatest and most desirable clearness was shown in the picture which was drawn of Germany's future.

It was presupposed that the united leadership of the Confederation would be under one Head. There was to be an Upper House, formed by the members of the Confederacy or their delegates, and a Lower House from the representatives of the individual States at the rate of one Deputy to 100,000 inhabitants. The competency of the Head of the Confederacy and both Houses of the German Parliament extended to military affairs and arming of the people, legislation of home and States citizens' rights, the administration of justice, criminal law, commercial law, Confederate jurisdiction, the establishment of a universal system of customs, of money, measures, weights, railroads, river-beds, lastly, the restoration of common representation of the Confederacy in foreign countries.

This Prussian programme was set forth as clearly theoretically, as it was doubtful by what means it was to be put into execution. Whilst the resolutions arrived at concerning the above points were withheld from the former German Diet and even from the constitutional powers of the single States, the time had come when deeds alone could decide in the damage done by the popular agitations which had originated in Frankfort.

The Prussian Cabinet did not, indeed, omit to give the most binding assurances of the decided wish of the King to bring about the sole leadership of the Confederacy under one Head, and it referred to His Majesty's declaration that he himself would undertake this leadership during the days of present danger, but the weakness which had been shown with regard to the riot in Berlin awakened but little confidence in the Conservatives, but little enthusiasm for the Prussian leadership of German affairs in the progressive and Liberal party.

Everyone turned in blind excitement from the Prussian attempts to bring about the national unity, and followed the syren's song of the Frankfort assailants. The quietly thoughtful politician who knew that no further step was to be expected of Prussia, which would satisfy the enthusiasm of the time, had to try to content himself with wondering what turn things would next take.

My brother, for his part, had left nothing undone in order to force me to adopt his view of a strong Central Power, and that with a Prussian head, but I could only find that engagements were soon met prematurely on all sides. Even if I entirely approved of Albert's views in theory, yet I cherish well-founded doubts that with such a personality as that of Frederick William IV anything great and enduring was to be created by Prussia. Finally, Stockmar had gone over more and more completely to the Frankfort view of faithfulness to the Confederacy, although he hesitated for a long time before accepting the proffered representation of Coburg in the committee of proxies. He was very undecided and altogether undetermined in every way, when the occurrences in Berlin had as it were completely destroyed all his plans.

Under these circumstances the Frankfort tendency assumed an ever increasing preponderance, and the personages who had assembled there since the beginning of April, partly as envoys to the Diet, partly as proxies, lent a seeming brilliancy to it, by which it was difficult not to be impressed, no matter how practically and realistically one judged things. Added to this, the representatives of Prussia, Usedom and Dahlmann, spread the report through Frankfort itself that it was possible that the King and the Prussian Government might adopt the course now become national.

In England, Bunsen spread the belief that the King, over whom he appeared to exercise personal influence, would allow himself to be induced to accept the hand held out to him from Frankfort. It produced the impression that one could sail well if one would trust one's self for the moment to the current of air proceeding from the newly organised Confederate Assembly.

As Austria also appeared to submit to the desire of the Empire by nominating Schmerling as envoy to the German Diet, the hope of a solution of the question from the point of view of the federal laws increased in the circles nearest to me, and the legal means of development would unquestionably have remained most apparent if a general understanding could possibly have been arrived at and the Confederate State had, as it were, organically developed from the former States Confederation.

With this view, my brother drew up the Memorial of the 28th of March, of which he spoke in the letter introduced above. Copies of the same had reached the larger Governments and particularly the King of Prussia, who annotated my brother's project with original remarks and answered it with his own hand.

I will now introduce the text of this interesting document.*

'*Buckingham Palace, March* 28.

'Germany, from a States Confederation must become a Confederated State—that is the task which must be accomplished. If this solution is healing and enduring, it must be developed from the present matter and become the issuing point of all German history. It must not be a made theory, but the final representation of a State long expected and desired by the German nation, a State in which all conditions and exigencies of the individual territories will be fully satisfied. We have individually different nations in Germany, states, dynasties, crowns complete in themselves, which must all be united. To level and blot out the individualities of the nations by a centralisation upon the same model, would be *sinful*, for the manifold vital powers and freshness of life of the German people consist in their peculiarity and legality. The crowns and dynasties which are one with the personality of this State, must not be injured or degraded, if the personality and executive power of the individual States represented by them is not to be disturbed; but both States and peoples must be politically brought together as a whole and vividly represented.

'My conception of the solution is as follows:

'The Princes of the German Confederacy together with the four burgomasters of the free cities form a *Princely Diet* and choose from amongst their number for life, or a certain number of years (ten ?) a German Emperor. (X)

'The Parliaments of the different German States choose

* They are all in one publication: 'Zum Verstandniss der Deutschen Frage, Stuttgart 1867, but the pamphlet is so rare that I consider myself justified in having them republished from my own papers. The lines and crosses, red in the original black here, originate, as will be seen from the following letter written by the King from the latter.

from amongst the members of their two Houses,* a number of members according to the number of inhabitants and importance of the individual States, and form therewith a German Imperial Diet.

'A Supreme Court of the Empire, presided over by a Chancellor who can *not* be removed, would form the highest Court of Judicature, composed of the juridical faculties of the German universities, deciding all questions between the different individual Governments and their Parliaments, such as German questions of succession and regency, as well as divisions and inheritances.

'The representation of Germany falls to the Emperor. All business concerning the Empire will be carried on in his name. He appoints the offices together with the Princely Diet. At the head of the Princely Diet he will regularly open the Imperial Diet. He can refuse the proposals of the Princes, and a decree of the Empire only becomes lawful through his sanction. He can occasionally allow himself to be represented by another Prince. His Ministers are the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the two Presidents of a Chamber of Commerce and a Councillor of War. These Ministers are *answerable to the Imperial Diet.* The Foreign Ministry has to negotiate with Foreign Ambassadors, and, in extraordinary cases, to send messengers to foreign Courts.

'The German Chamber of Commerce, formed of servants of the individual States, has under it the affairs concerning the German customs, navigation, streets, railways, post-office and traffic.

'The German Council of War, formed by the Generals of the different armies, rules the organisation of the combined German army, formed by the troops of the different individual States, at the head of which stands a Confederate Commander-in-chief in times of war. In the same way the German fortresses are under a council of war and (in prospect) the *German fleet.*

The German sovereigns *themselves* form the Princely Diet, or the Princes of their House who represent them. It has a veto against the decisions of the Imperial Diet, and against the appointment to offices by the Emperor. It fills the three

* On the margin the King has written 'optime.'

Imperial Houses of Parliament under the Presidency of the Emperor. It has to sanction the proposals made by the Emperor to the Imperial Diet. It votes according to the majority, but in such a manner that the Princes of larger States have a comparatively larger number of votes. Every Prince can dissent by procuration. The Princely Diet elects the Confederate Commander-in-Chief with the Emperor, in case of a lasting war.

'The Imperial Diet assembles every *three years*. The Deputies (Imperial messengers?) of both Chambers of the different States sit and transact business together, but vote in two bodies corresponding to the Chambers. (X)

'Every member speaks from his seat. The Imperial Diet votes by majority, so that the agreement of both bodies is necessary. The number of members must not be too large. Not over 50 in the first, not over 150 in the second Chamber, 200 altogether. Marshal of the Empire, elected by the whole Imperial Diet from the first House, must have the Presidency. (X)

'Thus we have an Emperor as the representative and personification of German unity, and as the chief handler of the executive power—his worthiness vouched for by the choice of and from amongst thirty-seven sovereign heads, upon whom, on the other hand, falls part of the splendour of the dignity created by themselves.

'Further, as members of the executive power, a responsible Ministry in the Presidents of the three Imperial Chambers and a Confederate Field Marshal, whose ability is warranted by the time of his election. Further, a Princely Diet as immediate participants of the executive power, as well as the representative importance of the Emperor, who, through this necessary participation, fully assures the unimpaired continuation of the might and highness of all German crowns. Then an Imperial Diet as the expression of the united will of the whole German nation, yet so united, that the individuality of each separate German people and State is thoroughly represented through the sending of Imperial messages from their own parliaments. Finally, we have a high Supreme Court of the Empire as an expression of the united German juridical

wisdom, removed from all external influences through its immovability.

'The warrant of all these authorities naturally reaches only as far as matters of universal German importance—which we shall be able to decide more nearly—without encroaching upon the legislature and administrative department.

'ALBERT.'

When my brother sent me the copy of this plan, I at once perceived an error in the attempt to have an Emperor chosen for only ten years, or even for life, which would be fatal to the whole project, and I was afterwards glad to see from the reply and the remarks of King Frederick William IV, that I had not made a mistake in this respect. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the King of Prussia's comprehension evidently rivalled so greatly with my brother's plan in the doctrinary statement of improbabilities and impossibilities, that nothing could be done in this way either. I can feel pleased even at this time, that I at once frankly discussed both sides of the question at the time.

The King was at Potsdam when my brother's document arrived, and he let his answer, which was not especially addressed to any one person, become known as a kind of confidential circular at friendly Courts. In this way, which suited the extraordinary times, a remarkable exchange of opinion was brought about amongst the sovereigns, which was continued for more than two years, without a real insight of their knowledge of the course of affairs being possible.

The non-official circular note of Frederick William IV to the colleague princes of Germany ran as follows:

'Of all the constitutional projects for Germany, this one imagined by the clever and intellectual prince corresponds most with my views. But as regards individual matters I cannot assent to this project. That to which I particularly agree I have underlined with red; that which I consider unsuitable is marked with a black St Andrew's cross. I do not relish the idea of an Emperor as Head of the Confederacy. An Emperor elected for a time is a monstrosity against which I particularly protest. If the Confederate Head is only elected for a time (which I look upon as wrong) the name of

Emperor must not be squandered and dishonoured through him. He should be called Regent. Even to the life-long Head the title of Emperor cannot be given, on account of Austria, as I will show later on.

'The German nation has a right, dating back a thousand years, to make its head the indisputable First Head of Christendom. But it is not conceivable that the heir of thirty Roman Emperors, that is, the first hereditary Emperor, would give precedence to this chosen Head. It cannot even be expected. But it is as certain as anything can be, that the Russian Emperor would never grant such dignity to this kind of a German Emperor. Out of all this I know a very easy way,—for the German matter even a self-evident one. Let the Roman Emperor be again accepted as the Honourable Head of the German nation. Let the Roman Imperial dignity be renewed, and indissolubly with the hereditary Empire of Austria, as it was until the year 1806—*pro honoris causa*, if one will. Let certain significant honours be also paid to him. I am altogether in favour of the choice of a particular German Head of the Empire. If he is elected, as I hope to God he will be—for life, and then—in true German style—is also accepted as the royal authority appointed by God, (and is not regarded, *á la polonaise*; as the football of the ambitions of magnates)—let him be called "King of the Germans"—as in olden times, I would like for the Kings of the Confederacy (who should once more associate their title with that of Elector) to stand the election alone; but afterwards to call upon the remaining sovereign Princes for their consent. Both should be done in a few hours, the Kings and Grand-Dukes perhaps in the so-called conclave of the Cathedral of St Bartholomew in Frankfort, the Princes in the choir. Upon this let them address themselves to the Romish Emperor and respectfully request him to ratify the election. This can be done by an Archduke to whom plenipotentiary powers have been given, at the same moment. Then the Cathedral should be opened to the people as in olden times and their acclamations would complete the election. Soon after this the German King should be anointed and crowned (like the Roman Emperor at his hereditary entrance into power) and, if he is a Roman Catholic, by the Archbishop of

Cologne, who would become Chancellor of the Empire—if he is Evangelical, by an Archbishop of Magdeburg, who should be nominated *Primas Germaniae.*

'By means of thus placing the Roman Imperial dignity on the head of the Austrian hereditary Emperor, Austria will then become secure to the German Empire. Austria will have won Germany for ever, and with Germany the most beautiful and best lands of Germany will be secured for the new (old) kingdom—Tyrol, Vorarlberg, Upper and Lower Austria, Steyermark, Carinthia, Carniola and Istria. If Austria does not wear the highest crown, it is impossible to expect her to bow before a German elected Head, if she ever comes to herself again. And who can doubt it? The Princely Diet appears to me to be an uncommonly happy thought. Only I picture it to myself formed like the old Imperial Diet, into a college of Kings and Grand-Dukes, of Dukes and Princes, strengthened by the mediatised Princes and Counts (partly *viritim,* partly divided into benches), the Princely Diet would form the German Upper House of the Imperial Diet every three years, the Lower House of which would be the House or Assembly of Imperial Messengers. Only I pressingly recommend that it should never be forgotten in the relative position of the Upper to the Lower House, that sovereign Princes form its kernel, and under them two Great Powers (may God have mercy on them!)

'The providing of a responsible Ministry also appeals greatly to me. Whether the Head, that is when it is the King of the Germans himself, cannot be allowed a little more freedom of action, I leave undecided. But under certain circumstances, for instance in case of war or rebellion, I would insist upon the King being made Dictator. . . . I had forgotten my formal protest against the combined deliberation of the Houses of Princes and Imperial Messengers. That never does any good, and may possibly expose the highest sovereigns to insult, which must be avoided. The forcing together of fifty Princes and 150 Imperial Messengers is unjust and would certainly end in the victory of the Imperial Messengers. Amongst the Imperial Messengers I should like to see the immediate nobility of the Empire represented with assessors for the remaining German nobility; then Deputies for the

towns and country constituencies, who, however, must not be forced to vote out of their constituencies, whose option is free.

'I will close my remarks now, and warmly recommend them to the reader.'

As may be seen, the constitutional construction of the German Empire had become an absorbing occupation for the highest circles, and no one would be in a position correctly to understand the whole attitude of King Frederick William during the next two years, who had not imprinted on his memory the fixed limits marked out in the above memorial. Frederick William IV had actually chosen the fundamental ideas just explained for his unchangeable rule of precept during the events which were happening around him.

Meantime the committee of Seventeen Proxies had begun active work in Frankfort in April, and besides this, the preparatory Parliament had begun to hold council. In both assemblies Dalhmann came forward with certain proposals, and his *elaborat* concerning the future form of the Empire was spread abroad as the bill for the constitution of the Seventeen, and recommended for acceptance.

In America and England, as on the Continent, people occupied themselves seriously with it, whilst in Germany the agitation concerning it had long since died out, and both favourable and unfavourable criticisms could only appear in the light of innocent and academical dissertations.

It is known that Frederick William IV personally gave all his attention to the bill for the constitution, King Max of Bavaria answering him through his Government.*

The unfavourable criticism which my brother finally made of the bill, cannot be fully understood without my inserting several portions of our correspondence:

'*Coburg*, 5*th April* 1848.

'I am writing to you again to-day, as every day brings forth something new, and the development of our universal German relations advances so quickly that one hardly has time to keep pace with it. We shall soon have gained the end in view, when it will be seen whether there are to be

* All these documents are known through Dahlmann's remission, and have been repeatedly communicated.

princes in Germany, or the Republic is to be formed after the American pattern. In case of the first, the following conditions must be accepted, or rather consented to by the reigning sovereigns:

'1. Constitution of a Confederate Head under the name of President.

'2. A German Parliament, but one House.

'3. A Ministry answerable to this Parliament.

'4. A Confederate Field-Marshal.

'5. The German Princes must give up all rights of sovereignty, which they formerly claimed as their own for the increase of the dignity of their supremacy. To this belongs the rule that no sovereign may have his own military power, etc.

'6. Arming of the people, abolition of all standing armies.

'7. Alteration of the already existing Constitution; abolition of the two House system.

'8. Abolition of the nobility and all feudal burdens.

'9. Introduction of a universal German system of weights, coinage, customs, etc.

'All historical ground must be abandoned, and it must be worked and constituted only after the American pattern. I have only introduced the most important points here; but there are many others of less universal interest.

'If all that has been mentioned above were the furthest goal which we are striving to reach, one might at least indulge in the hope that one could perhaps get through with fewer ultra-liberal principles: As it is, these points are the nearest goal and the last hope which remains to us before we come to the Republic.

'One must not think that this would perhaps be universally desired; it is however, unfortunately evident that in the universal rivalry always to be first in Liberalism, the German races have brought themselves so far that they have arrived, to their own astonishment, before the gates of the Republic, without really having wished to do so. This is the true state of affairs, which is unfortunately no imaginary picture of a depressed mind, but the sad result, which I have experienced through the medium of Briegleb, from the communications of the leaders of the whole movement, such as Welcker, Bassermann, Itzstein . . . .

'To-morrow, the 30th, envoys from all the German Princes will assemble in Frankfort, to consider the introduction and carrying out of those points. Unfortunately, however, it will only be a question of whether they can accept these points *pure* or not. If the sovereigns do not quietly accommodate themselves to everything, the envoys of most of the southern and middle German States have decided to engage in no negotiations whatever, and to join the Second Assembly, an illegal body, it is true, which comes together in Frankfort at the same time, and consists of men from all parts of Germany, who have united of their own free will, and who wish to carry out their private views and decisions by means of force. It will then be a question of leading this dangerous body, and preventing the mischief as far as possible. In any case, everything looks very black for us. In order to remain steadfast I have sent Briegleb to Frankfort. He is young, strong and of sharp understanding and certainly no Conservative. I shall communicate to you the news he sends me, it will be the most correct which one can obtain concerning the agitation.

'*P.S.*—I have just received your letter of the 25th. I am sorry that Stockmar is momentarily not in a position to undertake a mission, such as Briegleb's, and think that his reflective nature would have suited the *Enragés* too little, who are now about to lay down laws for us. One ought to hate everything, when one thinks that if the King of Prussia had three days earlier done what he now feels himself forced to do, Germany might have looked forward to a safe future.'

'*Gotha, April 6th* 1848.

'I received your two letters with enclosure regarding the formation of the Confederacy, and only regret having no time to answer you at length concerning this matter. You will excuse me if I own to a fear that, in consequence of your surroundings and your close acquaintance with Bunsen, as well as the presence of the Prince of Prussia, you are viewing the whole state of affairs in Germany too much from a Prussian point of view.

'I have no feeling of distrust against the King of Prussia, but I look upon him—and this is the opinion of all Germany,

as impossible at the present moment! His name alone is *unfortunately* enough to spoil any cause whatever which he joins. His portrait also has been abused and publicly burned by the people in Munich, Stuttgart, Karlsruhe and Frankfort. If such terrible mistakes had not been made in Berlin, the King might seize upon the leadership of the matter if it is in any way to be undertaken by a monarch. Things are unfortunately far worse than you consider them, and than they can possibly appear at a distance.

'Rest assured that up to the present the most complete anarchy reigns in Germany, and that everything now depends upon the "sovereign" people. The transactions of the 800 men in the church of St Paul in Frankfort, the paper of which I send you, you must read attentively; they are the proof that the Republicans have retired for a moment only; unfortunately they, that is, their leaders have been again nominated as substitutes for the fifty permanent members, Briegleb was also nominated as one of the fifty.

'Illegal as is this Assembly, the German Diet has nevertheless entered into a kind of communication with it, and will for a while maintain itself by this means. Meanwhile the elections for Parliament are about to begin in Germany. One Deputy to every 500,000 inhabitants. One must really be present on the spot in order to be able to conceive the real circumstances. If you took a great many German newspapers now, you would soon see that your proposal, excellent as it is, seems to have come a century too late. Your presupposition is nearer to realisation than you thought a week ago. The democrats have really triumphed already. The matter now in hand is the conditions of peace. If Prussia had acted four days earlier, before being forced to do so, there would have been prospects of a perfect state of things. Now it has come too late.'

In the same state of mind I wrote to my brother on the 17th of April that he judged the course of things much too optimistically. It was indeed characteristic that the Committee of Fifty, which possessed no legal power whatever, not only drew up proclamations, but sent decrees to the Governments, and nevertheless remained entirely unmolested by the Confederate Assembly and the Seventeen.

'Further,' said I in my letter, 'it is a fact that at this moment the Committee of Fifty governs Germany with the German Confederacy as a sort of Co-regent, and illegally as it has constituted itself, it has nevertheless been recognised by all the German Governments. It has even been referred to regarding commerce. The reason of this cannot possibly lie in any plan of the people or of any Government, I call it the "consequence of the spirit of the times."'

At the time the frequently mentioned Bill of the Seventeen appeared, it was no longer so much as fitted for exercising great influence over the Parliamentary elections which had meantime been begun. It was characteristic of my Duchy of Gotha, that Briegleb was already looked upon at that time as an Ultra-Conservative, and could only be carried against the Radicals with great trouble.

Phenomena of this kind showed the Bill of the Seventeen as the really unpractical and hopeless result of a doctrine which met with but little sympathy from the greater mass of the people. Only one fact can be granted, that at least a substratum had been formed for the questions to be discussed for the future Constitution which could prevent the negotiations from being entirely neglected.

I was therefore really glad when Albert criticised the Bill in a way which, as is known, made a deeply discouraging impression on the members of the Committee of Seventeen. My brother had already seen in the middle of April that the proceedings in Frankfort were only too favourable to radical and doctrinary productions, and therefore wrote to me from Osborne on the 11th of April:

'Exert yourself to prevent Frankfort from remaining the capital of Germany. It is a bad place, and so easily overrun by mobs from Baden, Mainz, Darmstadt, Mannheim, etc., also much too near the French frontier. Nüremberg is the centre of Germany and lies in a good region.'

As for the rest, even on the 13th of April my brother would not admit the hopelessness of the work of the German Constitution, and with his usual frankness wrote almost reproachfully concerning my descriptions of the 6th: 'That those who desired order should not immediately cry out that anarchy had come!' He still believed that we ought only to

'throw the right yeast into the brew,' and blamed me 'for keeping perfectly neutral.'

'Whether Prussia' he continued, 'places herself at the head or not, has remained quite untouched in my plan (of the 28th of March), its essential difference from the Heidelberg-Frankfort plan consists in the fact that commons remain commons, peers peers, sovereigns sovereigns and yet they form a constitutional whole. And only thus can something come of it; for the Emperor of Austria can certainly not be Emperor at home and Peer in Germany! The points were entirely passed over in Frankfort, because people fixed their utmost attention on the construction of the Assembly and the parts of the Constitution only, in which they themselves would figure in future; how the remainder was done was all the same to them. Do not thrust the matter so lightly from you: you will regret it when it is too late.'

My brother's last warning was hardly necessary, yet up to the present I had seen no useful means of managing the development of German affairs, and was therefore glad when I arrived at full agreement with Albert in regard to the Bill of the Seventeen. He himself spoke in much plainer terms to me than in the Memoir, which reached Dahlmann through Bunsen.

'The principal thing,' he wrote on the 4th of May, 'is now the Constitution for Germany. The plan which I hear has been accepted by the Seventeen, is *shocking!* You must do your utmost in order to modify, at least, *one* point. Patriotism can submit to everything, but not to a change of principles. That the sovereign should sit in the Confederation with other Councillors of the Empire, as such, is not *possible, rather not at all!* Obey the German Emperor and Parliament—if you will—but do not let it be expected of you that you will be Dukes, Grand-Dukes, Electors and Kings at home, and in Frankfort one of the two hundred Imperial Councillors. I do not understand how anyone can commit such a blunder. But it will be necessary for you sovereigns to come to an understanding at some time concerning these things, and insist upon the removing of the residence from Frankfort. It is a frightful place to be the central point of Germany!

'*P.S.*—Your letter with enclosures has just arrived . . . As

regards universal German affairs, I certainly advise subordination to a temporary Central Power, if such an one can be formed, and in future to work principally towards making Austria remain in the German States Confederation, and then sail in the same boat with them. It would be absurd to ask certain things of Austria, Prussia and Bavaria. If Prussia alone is left, her preponderance will be so great that one may expect ignominy for the rest. The individual States must be limited, and greatly limited, but they need not be put down in order to obtain unity.'

My letter of the 9th of May was written in answer to this.

'We are hastening forward to the day of decision with giant steps. The hope of constituting a united compact state of things for Germany is no small one; but, on the other hand, the hope of preserving the small German Princes is null. The most important thing which I have now to communicate to you is that we small princes will, as regards the constituent Assembly, let ourselves be represented in the corporation of the Confederation, as we cannot appear in person. Every little territory will then have its civil vote. To this end I felt myself bound to choose a particular man as Ambassador for Coburg-Gotha also. Stockmar alone could be the man! And I am glad to be able to tell you that he not only consented willingly, but feels so much better, that he will be able to set out for Frankfort to-morrow. I look upon his appearance in the Confederacy as a lucky event. He asked me to-day to inform you of this, as he would only be able to write to you from Frankfort.

'All eyes are now turned in anxious expectation towards Frankfort, where daily and hourly the Deputies of the people are arriving for the settlement of the Constitution. Briegleb who has up to the present been secretary to the Fifty, and has not entered Parliament, hastened here for a few hours in order to consult with Stockmar and me concerning the important questions of the future. I shall take pains to explain to you in a few words the state of affairs, as Briegleb judges them in Frankfort and we judge them here.

'The Republic has but few if energetic supporters on her side. These are for the most part anarchists. They want law from above internally as well as externally. They do

not want monarchy for the sake of the Princes, but because they see that the Republic is more dangerous to freedom than monarchy, naturally only the constitutional monarchy is meant.

'All dynastic, personal considerations of Princely Houses, as for us individually, have been left in the background, much as individual races cherish and express love and respect for their Princes.—Prussia and her King are to be placed at the head, but only because it is Prussia, the largest and most important of the Confederate States. The person of the King, hated as it may appear to be, is a secondary thing, and is not taken into consideration at all. To unity and strength both inwardly and outwardly, immense sacrifices are to be made,—in order to form a commanding Great State. May Heaven bless the cause; but many a heart must break first, and many tears must flow. Hundreds of families will be reduced from an existence poor, it is true, but free from care, to beggary. May the time never come when they will regret what they now firmly intend to carry out.

'Austria is now on the point of being torn into pieces. If the Germans in the Imperial State do not wish to be destroyed by Slavs, Czechs and Magyars, they must surrender at discretion to the Parliament. It is very probable that Russia is thinking of playing Austria a trick in return for her long friendship. They have been working for years to seduce the Southern Provinces.

'I have just received your welcome letter of the 4th inst.—I am glad that you are against the Bill for the Constitution drawn up by the Seventeen Proxies. I look upon the work as bad, and the views as unpractical, and *many* think as I do. Nevertheless, it *will come* to something of the same kind, as no place will be made for us small Princes. We are not to have the position of the mediatised, but are to descend with them and the nobility to the democratised burghers. Their intentions are quite friendly. But one thing is certain, that we small Princes cannot possibly maintain ourselves, since we, after the Emperor has been presented with the chief rights of sovereignty, and we have, with regard to the legislature, received everything necessary, generally, from the future Parliament, should really make too dear and too bad Chief

Presidents. But I will say no more about this, for in a few weeks we shall know what to expect.'

A few days later I received the Memoir drawn up by my brother himself against the Bill of the Seventeen, and answered on the 16th of May.

'Your denunciations agree entirely with my views, and your reasons are unanswerable; unfortunately, however, entirely in opposition to the wishes of our Liberals, who only want a mock Emperor, who would be more preferable to them in his unimportance, than if hereditary or elective.

'In my opinion, the meaning of the whole bill has been enclosed in the frame of the French centralisation idea, without any understanding of the condition of things in Germany having been brought forward in opposition.'

'If we Princes,' I wrote at the close of the above quoted letter, 'now act as we *ought* and should like, we would have quickly united with the Moderates in a firm alliance, and then have made a new Constitution with them. But as it is, we are still under the yoke of distrust, which, even if it is light, will nevertheless be held fast by the Ultra-Liberals. The cry against attempts to react is still sounded, ungrounded as it is.'

CHAPTER X

THE SITUATION IN FRANKFORT.—PRUSSIA'S PROPOSAL REFUSED.—A DICTATORSHIP PROPOSED.—THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CONFEDERATION.—VON SCHMERLING.—PROPOSALS OF THE ENVOY FROM BADEN.—THE ILLEGAL COMMITTEE OF FIFTY.—REPORT OF VON GABLENZ.—DESIRE FOR RESTORATION OF HEREDITARY IMPERIAL DIGNITY.—ASSEMBLY OF GERMAN REPRESENTATIVES IN FRANKFORT.—STOCKMAR'S LOSS OF INFLUENCE.—PRINCE ALBERT AND THE HANDKERCHIEF.—CLOSE OF THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE INSTITUTION OF THE CENTRAL POWER.—APPOINTMENT OF ARCHDUKE JOHN OF AUSTRIA AS ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EMPIRE.—PRUSSIAN OBJECTIONS.—THE CELEBRATIONS IN COBURG AND GOTHA.—(WHO IS TO PAY THE BILL?).—INCAPACITY OF THE ARCHDUKE.—HIS LETTER TO THE DUKE.—PRINCE KARL VON LEININGEN UNDERTAKES THE PRESIDENCY.—HIS RADICAL VIEWS.—ANNOYANCE OF PRINCE ALBERT.—LEININGEN'S CHARACTER.—THE KING OF BAVARIA ESTABLISHES CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE AUSTRIAN COURT.—PRUSSIAN OBJECTION TO THE GERMAN MILITARY COLOURS.—POPULAR FESTIVAL AT GOTHA ON 6TH AUGUST.—FREDERICK WILLIAM'S OPPOSITION TO THE PARTY OF UNITY.—PRUSSIA'S ARMISTICE WITH DENMARK.—THE DUKE VISITS FRANKFORT.—THE MEETING IN ST PAUL'S CHURCH.—RETIREMENT OF PRINCE LEININGEN.—THE DUKE'S LETTER ON THE SITUATION TO PRINCE ALBERT.—REPUBLICAN RISING IN FRANKFORT.—STREET FIGHTING.—MURDER OF LICHNOWSKY AND AUERSWALD.—THE BARRICADES STORMED.—LICHNOWSKY'S LAST LETTER TO THE DUKE.—SYMPATHY OF PRINCE ALBERT.—DENSENESS OF THE PLENIPOTENTIARIES.

IN order to comprehend the situation in Frankfort at the time of the meeting of the National Assembly, one must go back to the events which had occurred in the German Diet itself since the middle of March. People were quite clear on one point, that the old Confederate Assembly could continue to exist neither over or with a German Parliament, the summoning of which had been agreed upon. But it had been far easier to form the National Assembly than to form a

governing power which could keep its stand against it. That the former German Diet would never be accepted by the National Assembly as the executive organ of the Empire, was a fact, concerning which no one could be deceived. Unless they wished to resign all continuance of justice, and expose Germany to all the uncertainties of a democratic Constituent Assembly, an organ must be formed which might be legally entrusted with the powers of the German Diet.

Prussia's proposal to undertake the direction of affairs had been refused, and the independent attempts of the Prussian Ministry to bring about a reform of the Confederacy had fallen to the ground. Concerning these tendencies on the part of the Berlin Government, the King of Bavaria did not hesitate to declare through his Ambassador in Frankfort: 'If there be any means by which the frightfully excited national feelings can be driven to the height of an explosion and the German diet completely nullified, those means are to be found in such demonstrations.' The Governments of Baden, Hesse, Nassau also drew quickly back from this plan, and declared the impossibility of being able to follow the programme of the Prussian Ministry at that time.

I was, as may have been seen from my letter already quoted, no less of the opinion that the energetic adoption of the Prussian policy, the position of the King being such as it was, would have meant the same thing in most lands as giving themselves up entirely.

If the King of Prussia desired to prove the truth of his words uttered on the 21st of March with regard to the German question, he must not avoid the roundabout way through Frankfort. But when, in most of the description of the Parliamentary history of the year 1848 it is asserted that in this case the interest and conduct of the Southern Germans had opposed an unavoidable hindrance to the Prussian policy, it is, at least as far as regards the beginning of the agitation, only correct in a very small degree.

Immediately at the beginning of the proposals of the united Courts of Darmstadt and Karlsruhe to establish a dictatorship and a national representation, Würtemberg had answered in a manner which had hitherto received barely

sufficient attention. Even the documents exchanged in those days between the Southern German States, and which were therefore independent of Prussian influence, showed how remarkably favourable the clauses were for Frederick William IV there also, where, after later events, nothing but opposition was usually offered. The King of Würtemberg not only approved of the intentions of the Courts which were working, according to the Prussian idea, to bring about a reform of the Confederacy, but himself offered the following explanations, which were much too little regarded:

"'His Majesty the King considers it unavoidable for the safety of the common Fatherland that the hitherto united Governments should declare their readiness to propose the leadership of affairs to that one of the chief German Regents whom the united votes shall elect, and His Majesty is prepared to entrust that leadership to Prussia; as, however, it is the conviction of the united Courts that Prussia's leadership only should be possible, and the public opinion and support of all Germany could only then be won if Prussia essentially grants her people the same rights and freedom which the Southern and Western German lands already possess, the hitherto united Courts would be able to look forward to some success for their efforts only under the above presupposition.

'The plenipotentiaries of the United Courts hope and expect to receive a communication from Prussia as soon as possible, and in case of consent would consider themselves authorised to journey to Berlin and uniting with the plenipotentiaries of all German Courts there, if possible, to arrive at some decision, be it a definite one, or only preparatory, while awaiting the consent of a Congress of Princes which will meantime have been proposed by Prussia.'

Meanwhile the good-will and the favourable moment had borne no fruit, and all immediate negotiations on the part of the Princes and their Governments had been broken up. Thus it would have indeed been urgently necessary and useful if Prussia had decided upon a higher kind of activity; but her envoy, Count Dönhoff, exhausted his strength by the old-fashioned means of jealously watching the Presidency of the Confederation, which had been entrusted during the last days

of March, to the hands of Count Colloredo, and six weeks later to Herr Anton von Schmerling.

Positive activity was in no way shown by the Prussian envoy in Frankfort, and what had been done in this respect in Berlin aroused the suspicion, that it was not a question of united Germany, but only of the aggrandisement of Prussia.

Considering the complete absence of a leader of the German Diet, it could hardly fail to happen that the entirely illegal Committee of Fifty gained a predominating influence. No session of the German Diet took place without the members having to occupy themselves with proposals from this mandateless body. The foundation of a provisory Central Power was always being talked about on all sides, but no decisions of any kind were arrived at. With dumb expectancy we looked forward to the meeting of the National Assembly which was not to take place until the 13th of May, and then at Prussia's urgent request, the opening was postponed until the 18th of May. The sole action, if not exactly a difficult one, in which Prussia had succeeded, was in effectuating the adoption of the Eastern Provinces which did not belong to the Confederacy by the new Germany, and thus placing herself in a position to essentially increase the number of her members in Parliament.

During the 37th session of the German Diet, on the 18th April the envoy from Baden had given expression to the pressure on all sides for the creation of a Confederate executive committee by means of several formal proposals. The executive committee was to be furnished with the widest authority 'to carry out in the name of the Confederacy the measures fitting to the circumstances and relations in all passing events.' It was to be formed by three commissioners, one of whom Austria was to appoint, the other Prussia, and the third all the remaining Confederate States, and three more were to be proposed by Bavaria.

Similar proposals had already been specially brought under discussion by the Weimar Minister von Watzdorf in the Saxon Parliament, and it was undeniable that the Governments would have a stronger and more secure position with regard to the National Assembly if they were united in this way by an executive committee. On the other hand, it was

not to be mistaken that Prussia might easily be outvoted in a triumvirate with Austria and Bavaria, whilst the endurance of the old Confederate relations would at least not prejudice a reorganisation by means of Prussian proposals. Unfortunately we waited in vain for a proposal from Prussia concerning the executive organ, which we might have agreed to in the Confederate Assembly.

The Committee of Fifty had previously urged the German Diet to agree to transactions which were of a highly doubtful nature. They began to allow themselves to be represented in foreign countries without there being any legal subject of representation to define. The Committee of Seventeen also urged several transactions regarding the German naval power which had better been left alone, particularly as regarded England, where they wished to obtain the ships.—Thus the relations of the German Diet in Frankfort towards the end of April had become quite untenable, and I repeat here a report drawn up at this time by the Saxon envoy von Gablenz, which, it appears to me, explained the situation clearly and with great knowledge of the matter, and which reached me on the 27th of April from Frankfort:

'The relations here are very much to be deplored, and it is urgently necessary that the Princes of Germany should soon assume a more decided attitude with regard to the constituent Assembly, unless complete anarchy and the triumph of the Republican party is desired.

'The Confederate Assembly is at present much too weak to fulfil its high destiny. Count Colloredo is not fitted for the Presidency, and Count Dönhoff, although an able man, is certainly no longer in the right place. It is incomprehensible that they have not provided in Berlin for his substitution by a more popular man. Herr von Wessenberg is pointed out as the successor to Count Colloredo.*

'Even now the mutual jealousy of Austria and Prussia shows them at a great disadvantage. Each of the two envoys is afraid of the other's obtaining greater popularity, and thus it happens that neither dares to oppose the exactions of the Fifty, as soon as the other makes a motion of yielding. Besides this, elements have lately come into the Confederate

* It was Schmerling, as is known.

Assembly, concerning which it is not at all certain whether they are not purposely playing into the hands of the extreme party itself, or whether it is only a total want of energy, failing to oppose where it is necessary to do so.

'Thus it may happen that the Constituent Assembly will openly ally themselves with the Fifty, and not with the German Diet, especially if they meet, as decided, on the 1st of May, when the republican Southern Germans will arrive here in superior numbers, and will have the upper hand. As an agreement between all the Governments concerning the acceptance of the Weimar proposals, or that of the envoy from Baden with regard to the appointment of a triumvirate is difficult to settle in time, I also am of the opinion that the monarchical principle, or, at least, the continuance of the smaller Princely Houses, may yet be saved by voluntary recognition of a Head on the part of the Princes. For this, it is not at all necessary that all Princes agree concerning the choice of a Head, as individual ones also can preside with such a voluntary submission, and then we shall be able to count all the more certainly on favourable conditions.

'Considering the situation of affairs, the choice would lie between Austria and Prussia alone. But I think that the former is much too near internal dissolution to warrant any support. Besides this, they are by no means inclined in Austria to sacrifice the unity of the Austrian monarchy to the unity of Germany, so that the complete union of Germany with Austria is not to be thought of. This is becoming more and more recognised, and the enthusiasm which was at first felt for the Austrians who had entered the Assembly of the Fifty, is beginning to cool.'

How very well-founded the judgment of my informant was concerning the wide separation between all the parties in the German Diet, was also shown in military matters, which in spite of the determination* already arrived at on the 27th of April, never came to the election of a Confederate Commander-in-Chief. For my part, I had taken pains to direct the nomination for the position of Commander-in-Chief to General von Wrangel, and for that of Lieutenant-General to Prince Theodore of Thurn and Taxis.

* Compare separate Protocol of the 42nd session of the German Confederate Assembly of the 27th April 1848.

At the same time, the last hopes of the Liberal statesmen of the Confederate Assembly had been set on the proposed bill for the Constitution drawn up by the Seventeen. They pretended that the German Diet would be forced to cling to the last anchor of safety for a legal development of affairs. The judgment concerning most of the Courts given by the middle and smaller States alone had long prepared us to expect a negative vote from the Diet, and a memorial, compiled by Herr von der Pfordten in Dresden, which was zealously circulated and which, not without cleverness, expressed opposition to the foundation of a hereditary imperial dignity confirmed us in this:

'The restoration of a hereditary Imperial dignity,' said Herr von der Pfordten in his memorandum, 'is indeed very much to be desired, and to be kept in view for the future; for the present it appears impossible for many reasons which can hardly be explained. Austria is passing through a crisis, the end of which cannot be conjectured, but she can hardly continue to keep her strength, according to German opinion; her new Constitution has founded a Slav State rather than a German one. Prussia is not consolidated either, and almost the entire nation has a feeling of antipathy for her. The remaining States are not strong enough to bear a hereditary Imperial crown, and an Emperor without an Empire is conceivable theoretically, but not possible practically.

'If, therefore, a hereditary Emperor is impossible, an elected Empire should be rejected for good, and unless one wishes to forget all the lessons taught by history. We must declare ourselves with equal firmness against a collective Head, whether it be the whole German Diet or a College of Three, which would only continue the weaknesses hitherto shown by the Confederate Power. Only a single Head with a responsible Ministry at his side can be the bearer of a strong Central Power, such as Germany needs, unless she is to fall a prey to outside foes and anarchy, and only such a monarchical Central Power can form a guarantee for the monarchical constitution of the individual States. If the Central Power is formed by Republicans, it will very soon swallow up the individual monarchs.

'After all these considerations the following proposal alone

appears to be feasible. The dignity of the Head should alternate every five years between the Emperor of Austria and the German Kings according to the order of rank they have hitherto held, in such a manner, nevertheless, that the first Head would now be elected by the majority by the votes of the members of the Confederacy in a close council, but the Emperor of Austria, if not elected, should in any case be the first to begin.'

I should not like to assert that Herr von der Pfordten's proposal would have had any prospects of meeting with approval, but it actually put an end to the Bill of the Committee of Seventeen. Bavaria also made a move against the latter by bringing forward a programme of her own, in which the triumvirate idea of Baden was largely developed and improved. I was very doubtful if the Saxon and Bavarian Cabinet were in the remotest degree in earnest regarding these proposals, they only wished to complicate the case, in order to have a back door of escape in case of universal dissent.

What remained decided at the moment was the riotous noisiness and the opposition of the Committee of Fifty in Frankfort, which took care that the Governments should be entirely disarmed as far as the constituent National Assembly was concerned. The triumvirate, as well as every other consolidation of the Confederacy, was fought against to the utmost here, and as the weakness of the Princes and their want of unity had cleared the field for the Committee of Fifty, the future alone was left for the Parliament to strive for.

Since the beginning of May the representatives of all the German peoples had assembled in Frankfort, to which city of old reminiscences the unpractical mind of the German politician would cling. Every other place would have been better, as my brother had correctly asserted beforehand, for the meeting of the great National Assembly. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that our fears concerning the construction of the first great legal representation of Germany had been exaggerated.

The conviction was soon borne in upon us that the body which had come together here concealed in its midst, in the majority, a power of intellect and education, which

would have been admirable if political experience and knowledge of real states and personal relations had accompanied it in an equal degree. The fault here was, that most of the Moderates had come to Frankfort without any clear idea of their task, and were, so to speak, waiting for some kind of inspiration; thus it was that the members allowed themselves to be ruled by casual events and the influence of clever speakers.

I had early taken measures to procure exact information concerning the events in and outside of St Paul's Church. Since the middle of May the Saxon Duchies, as well as all the other States, had sent a special representative to the Confederacy for the civil votes. The consequence, as I have already remarked, was that Stockmar had been made plenipotentiary for Coburg-Gotha; Meiningen elected my old, closely connected tutor of Bonn, Professor Perthes. Besides this, I had sent an excellent observer and minute informant to Frankfort in Herr von Meyern, who supplied me with the most correct knowledge of persons and things.

It is not my intention to furnish a history of the great Assembly from the rich materials supplied me by these excellent men, but only to bring forward the chief points which, according to their nature, exercised an influence over me, as over all individual Governments. Since the Presidency of the Confederacy had been conferred by the Austrian Government on their former proxy in the Council of Seventeen, Herr von Schmerling, the German Diet had unquestionably succeeded in gaining a somewhat more honourable position before its complete breaking up, but the question of the reorganisation of the Confederacy had gained but little thereby; rather the tendency and party which Germany was striving to place under Prussian leadership, had been crowded still more into the background.

Under these circumstances Stockmar had no influence in Frankfort; he was disappointed and more reserved than ever. Herr von Gagern had in the beginning of May, during a tour round the European Courts, visited my brother in London. Thus the latter, as he wrote to me, 'was given an opportunity of being able to see the cards.' In a disappointed frame of mind, in which my brother's

ironical style came to his aid, he remarked concerning the acquisitions of the new times: 'Mine consists in a handkerchief with the German colours which was sent me from Frankfort, the seat of the I myself German husbands, brothers, citizens, representatives, Fifties, qualified-opinion men, and I can now blow my nose in accordance with the spirit of the age.'

Whilst the German Diet was in every way being hindered from forming a provisory Imperial authority, the institution of an executive power was pointed out as the first and most necessary task immediately on the meeting of the National Assembly. Radicalism only desired to take away the important affairs from the German Diet, as the representative of the rights of Princes; 'the will of the people,' as they were fond of expressing it, 'must not be anticipated,' but the National Assembly referred the hastily brought forward proposal for the institution of an executive power to a committee of fifteen members.

With regard to the matter itself, one soon began to observe that exactly the same difficulties would arise in the National Assembly which had succeeded in preventing the German Diet from arriving at any determination. Other persons were acting, but the same principles prevailed. Just as in the German Diet, Austria and Prussia faced one another in an inimical attitude, and here, as there, the resource of the Triade was attempted. The idea of the Triumvirate was resuscitated in Parliament in a more democratic form, as they wished to see the future ruler of Germany invested not as the plenipotentiary of the Governments, but really as the proxy of the Parliament.

The Governments were only to point out the triumvirs, but their election and plenipotence were really to be the business of the National Assembly. Gagern, Schmerling and Camphausen were named as the future Imperial regents, and consolation was proffered the supporters of the rights of Princes in the assurance that these popular men were only to administrate provisorily. At the constitution of a definite Central Power, they said, it would be remembered that Princes also existed.

Only in the middle of June had the Committee for the institution of the Central Power closed their protracted deliberations, and gone as far as to formulate proposals for a provisory Confederate directory with as far-reaching a sphere of activity as possible. But at this time a complete change of disposition had already taken place, and there was a decided leaning towards a more monarchical form of government. In the circles of the German Diet, as well as amongst the Austrian and Southern German envoys, the name of the Archduke John had insensibly begun to be passed from mouth to mouth, and grown popular.

The Austrian Government might have every reason to bring forward, or, more correctly speaking, to play the Duke, who had but little influence at the Court of Vienna, as a fit person for the Confederate Presidency against the aspirations of Prussia. In order to procure votes for him, the Austrians spread a perfect atmosphere of Liberalism around his person, and the assurances of the German sentiments, which he was supposed to have already declared at the festival of Cologne Cathedral in 1842, were very happily circulated, a fitting change having been made in the text of his utterances. Hardly a single one of all the German national representatives assembled in Frankfort knew the Austrian Prince, whom Raveaux nevertheless called 'the first German patriot.' Several romantic tales of his marriage, manner of life and pretended neglect at the Imperial Court won for him, like popular fairy tales, the hearts of good men. Other German Princes were still less known amongst the representatives of the people than he was, and could not therefore be taken into consideration.

In Prussia, on the other hand, they were by no means of the opinion that the raising of an Austrian Archduke to the position of Administrator of the Empire was to be taken so naturally, as was the case in St Paul's Church. In Berlin the political background of such a choice was not misunderstood, and they struggled against it as long and as successfully as they could. But before the proposals, so carefully and thoroughly considered by the committee, for the establishment of the executive power had been laid before the whole Assembly, a firmly established majority had been formed

which had been won over to the one ruler scheme. At the night session of the 12th of June the Centre, consisting of about 300 representatives, voted for the establishment of one provisory Head.

They said that 'a Prince' also could and must submit to the conditions which had been made for the provisory Triumvirate, in order to undertake the government in a monarchical sense. The name 'Administrator of the Empire' was then added to the carefully prepared affair. At the same time the Rights had been won over to the one ruler scheme, out of consideration for the monarchical principle, and thus it became possible for even Vincke to give utterance in Parliament on the 21st of June, to the confident expectation that: 'Prussia also will gladly join in the election of Archduke John.' Without going more minutely into the particulars of the parliamentary struggle, I will communicate a piece of information of the 23rd of June from my Chargé d'Affaires in Frankfort who cannot deny its worth even at this date.

'At last the decision has become almost indubitable, the Triumvirate appears to have been entirely abandoned, not because there were reasons for refuting it—on the contrary, this has been universally acknowledged, even by its opponents—but because they wished to see the principle of *unity* preserved throughout, and because the supporters of the Triumvirate in the National Assembly have defended the latter either very lamely or not at all, to which may be added the fact that these supporters consist of the most learned and deepest thinkers in Parliament, but who are no speakers at all, and therefore are exposed, with their best proposals, to attacks from all sides against which they are unable to defend themselves. Briegleb says that the Triumvirate has fallen chiefly through the confidence with which all its opponents outside of St Paul's Church asserted: "It will not do! No one is seriously thinking of it! It has no supporters!" Thus its real supporters, who had not known their own numbers, had looked upon themselves as isolated, and relinquished the whole project. During last night's session, which, besides, was so unimportant, and mostly such a repetition of what had already taken place, that I consider a special description superfluous, they passed the Triumvirate over without notice,

and the debates turned for the most part on the quality of the *one* Head to be provisorily elected.

'The question now is, shall it be a Prince or a private man? If it be a Prince, it will mean a future *Emperor*, if a private man, it will mean a future President. This is clear to everyone. But whatever reasons may be brought forward for or against this, the decision of the majority is certain. Austria, Prussia and Bavaria will unite against the Republic, and for that anchor of monarchy, the provisory Prince. It will only depend upon whether the majority is *important*, for no one conceals from himself that the greatest possible unanimity in the choice of the Central Power will give the greatest possible strength and vitality.

'With this view it is of the greatest importance that Gagern has most decidedly declared that he will in no case and at no price accept the provisory place of President, as he does not consider himself fitted for it, and because he is well aware that by this nomination they only wish to remove him from his present post in which he can be useful to the Fatherland.

'The choice of a Prince will therefore depend more on the Left Centre, which would have decided more for a provisory Presidency with regard to Gagern's personality. A preliminary number of over 300 votes is said to have been already given for the Prince.

'But the majority have united not only concerning the rank, but the person also. The Archduke John is an old man, hence the great policy of Vincke, when he said yesterday that Prussia would no doubt gladly subordinate herself to the Archduke. He is already thinking of the inheritance.

'There appears to be no doubt of the Archduke's acceptance of the nomination. At least, Schmerling said it would certainly be the case, considering the importance of the post, and asked Herr von der Gabelentz whether, in case, as is expected, the *proposal* is left to the Princes, he would ask for instructions from his Government concerning it; besides, as it appears, many of the envoys took the authorisation to propose the Archduke for granted.'

Little, that was certain, had been made public concerning

the events which took place in the German Diet itself during the last days of its existence.

A formal instruction, in favour of the impending election of the Archduke John to the post of Administrator of the Empire, could probably not be furnished by any of the Princes at Frankfort; yet the envoys were more or less assured that they must not formally oppose the attempts of the Austrian Presidency to bring about a legal vote of the retiring German Diet in favour of the administration of the Empire.

Prussia's attitude had until then been wavering, but it was at length universally recognised that firm decisions were not to be counted upon from that quarter; Stockmar also was convinced that the King would do nothing. My representative in the German Diet had secretly escaped, if I may so put it, from Frankfort, on the 2nd of June, in a way which could only be explained by the singularity of this remarkable man, and, without giving any information either to me or my Ministry, had gone to Berlin, in order to bring the King into action at the last moment. He reaped no reward, meeting with no success whatever. The particulars of this are to be found with all desirable details in his memorials as well as Bunsen's.

It is an interesting fact that Secretary of the Legation von Meyern also remained unenlightened concerning Stockmar's undertaking, and could only report that he had 'unexpectedly gone away early this morning.' Of course the news had been spread in Frankfort that a last attempt had been made to force Frederick William IV to act, and the consequence was that the inimical operations of the last week in June were kept as secret as possible from my envoy by the circles of the German Diet. Meanwhile it could not be denied that the expiring Confederate Assembly had contrived the setting up of the administration of the Empire in a rather clever manner. They wrote to me from Frankfort on the 30th of June as follows: 'The German Diet has anticipated the National Assembly at the very last, and will now become for that reason the object of the bitterest attacks of the Left.

'Immediately after the close of the session of Parliament it held a session yesterday, and carried and sent off without

delay, *per estafet*, a congratulatory address, which had already been drawn up, to the Archduke John, in which, amongst other things, they expressed their pleasure at being able to inform him that *all the Governments* had *beforehand* declared their unanimity respecting his election,* and that they invited him to occupy his high post as soon as possible. Thus the Archduke receives the first news of his election from the German Diet, as the deputation from the National Assembly only leaves this morning.'

That the disappointment in Stockmar's circle was painful and cruel is self understood. And it was not his sixty years, as he said in his memorials, but the conviction of the utter untenableness of his position, which moved him to announce his retirement on the day of the breaking up of the German Diet, and to recommend Dr Perthes, who was also the representative of Meiningen, for the representation of the Duchies to the Administrator of the Empire.

Meanwhile the great universal satisfaction represented in the newspapers as being felt for the election of the Prince of a House of which one could not say that it had had much German sympathy of late years, was very imaginary. In Frankfort also, the pleasant excitement had been aroused only very gradually, and many toasts were necessary in order, as they said, to make 'John Landless' really popular with his electors. Even Gagern, whose bold grasp, or mistake, as others said, had made the affair successful, remained very still during the following days, as observers informed me, and accepted the homage which was offered him with dignity, but without pleasure.

A very droll recollection is connected in my mind with the election of the Administrator of the Empire, which was solemnly celebrated in Coburg and Gotha, as everywhere else, and which gave rise to a long and angry trial as to who should pay for the rejoicing. For the public exchequer, the provincial exchequers, the town exchequers, in short, everyone refused to pay for the various hundredweights of powder

* If such a unanimity in the German Diet, which can hardly be ascertained at this date, really reigned, it could only be explained by the fact that Stockmar's vote was not counted, as the vote was probably carried in close council, and Stockmar by no means led the Saxon civil vote. Besides, Stockmar demeaned himself, as is seen from the above, so independently, that even I had not the slightest influence over his actions.

which had been shot off for the new Administrator of the Empire on the 9th of June, as well as later on the 6th of August.

Meanwhile the Imperial deputation had hastened from Frankfort to Vienna, and the Archduke John was informed of his election to the administration of the Empire in the familiar way, and then solemnly brought to the residential city of the new, weak provisory Imperial power. He travelled by way of Dresden and Eisenach to Frankfort, and I did not fail on receiving this news, to go at once from Coburg to Gotha, in order fittingly to welcome the Head of the Empire to my land. As the Archduke remembered me from former meetings, our short conversation was of such a kind that I at once touched upon the burning questions. As, for my part, I had nothing to conceal, I spoke of the necessary sacrifices which the German Princes owed the work of unity, and may have shown greater vivacity in so doing than the Archduke expected, for he expressed himself afterwards to Stockmar in Frankfort as being greatly pleased, but almost in a surprised manner, at meeting with much cordiality on the part of Princes whom he had thought on the side of Prussia.

On the other hand, it was entirely wanting in tact of Herr Heckscher, afterwards the Archduke's Minister, not only to give a kind of certificate of good conduct concerning me as well as the King of Saxony and the Grand-Duke of Weimar on the tribune of the National Assembly, in his statement of the journey and reception of the Administrator of the Empire, but even to recommend us three as examples to the other German rulers whose fidelity to the Empire was not above all doubt—a proceeding which was considered very offensive, particularly in Prussia, and for which we were to a certain degree held responsible.

As for the rest, the Archduke, as I faintly remember, did not make the impression, as far as many points were concerned, of being fully at home in German matters. He plainly maintained the greatest reserve, whereas I expressed myself without dissembling and with the knowledge of all the consequences of the events of that time. We had long since become accustomed in Germany to regard the situation of the individual States as dangerous, and no longer discussed

the question of greater or less mediatisation, as the reader has seen in the preceding chapter, with anxious fear in confidential circles only, but generally very frankly and entirely officially. The Archduke kept up his wavering programmeless attitude in Frankfort, honestly and undoubtedly well meaning as it at that time was, and, as I was later able to observe, retained the feeling of being a man who was suddenly forced to establish entirely new relations.

His first act as ruler was to give notice of the constitution of the provisory Central Power, the leadership of which he had undertaken on the 12th of July, and the completion of which was placed on the 15th of July in the hands of a Ministry, which at first consisted only of Heckscher, the Prussian Major-General von Peucker and Herr von Schmerling.

The latter was able to unite the internal as well as the external affairs for the former with all the greater ease, as the sphere of activity of both was a very imaginary one. The Administrator of the Empire immediately announced his entrance into power by a circular note addressed to all the Confederate States. Although, remarkable to relate, this announcement was addressed to the States Ministries only, and not by a Prince to Princes, I nevertheless thought it right to answer it personally, and in a form such as is used on a real entrance into rule. I do not know now whether this was done by all rulers, or whether my personal homage produced a particular impression, at any rate, the Administrator of the Empire felt himself bound to thank me in a letter without any ministerial countersign, and which therefore deserves to be given here:

'Your Highness's honoured letter of the 25th inst., reached me yesterday by way of Vienna. I find with pleasure that it contains the expression of the same sentiments which, considering the serious circumstances under which I have entered upon the dignity of an Administrator of the Empire, and which surround us at the present hour, must be of all the greater value to me.

'The task which has been entrusted to me, and which only the purest love of my country could move me to accept, is great and difficult. May the help of God, as well as the

firm support which is given me by the full confidence and honest liking of the German Princes and peoples, give me strength and courage to carry out with success the work begun for the universal welfare. I can, therefore, only accept it with heartfelt thanks, if, as Your Highness has done in so friendly a way, the assurance of this support, this unlimited confidence is given me. It shall be my sacred duty to return both honestly, and, as union makes strength and happiness, we may hope that our splendid German Fatherland will also become so in the same way. My first care after my return to Frankfort was the completion of the Imperial Ministry. I have succeeded in establishing it, and in giving the leadership of affairs to men whose experience, insight, popularity, and well-known patriotism will offer a guarantee for the just and salutary administration of universal matters.

'I beg Your Highness to accept the renewed assurance of my hearty personal esteem and devotion.

'ARCHD. JOHN.

'*Frankfort, August 9th*, 1848.'

The completion of the Imperial Ministry, of which the Archduke spoke in the above letter, was, that my cousin, Prince Karl von Leiningen, had decided to undertake the Presidency, whilst Duckwitz, Beckerath and Mohl represented Commerce, Finance and Justice, with the already appointed Ministers of the Interior, for Foreign Affairs and War, and thus formed a complete Ministry. Leiningen's election was certainly happy, and calculated to decrease the poor opinion of the German Kingdom entertained by the great European world. My cousin's name would also vouch, particularly in England, for the restoration of diplomatic relations, and, in spite of all democratic phrases, the respect of persons also which was necessary in 1848.

The Prince was considered very energetic, and, so far as regarded the Unity of Germany, as decided to shrink from nothing, not even the mediatisation of the Princes.

He had also spoken earnestly and without concealment to my brother and myself, regarding the fact that the small lands were entirely untenable. In this respect he revealed a degree of Radicalism which would perhaps have been entirely

inexplicable in such a man, if one had not remembered that, as head of a Mediatised House, he saw in this course of development only a kind of compensating justice.

Concerning him, my brother wrote rather angrily to me on the 29th of July:

'Karl has written again that the Princes cannot retain their position, and advises them to abdicate quickly and to make at least a good bargain. This is, however, a low conception of higher interests—I still believe in the union of a federal monarchy. Prussia's start will have a good effect, only the Archduke must be surrounded by envoys from the individual States. Whom shall you send to him?—Camphausen goes from Prussia, I hear; Bunsen will perhaps be Foreign Minister, for he has suddenly been summoned to Berlin.'

When the news of Leiningen's nomination reached England, my brother nevertheless wrote with a certain degree of pleased interest:

'Karl has now taken his place in Frankfort, at the head of the First Ministry. I thought at once that he would become somebody, when he had the letter inserted in the General Post-Office newspaper, which act I so disapproved of that I at once attacked him on the subject. Meantime it is highly important that a man of standing should be at the head of the Ministry, and Karl has a talent for Foreign politics. Whether he will have the necessary endurance must remain to be shown. Stockmar will probably do some prompting. I am receiving the most various kinds of information.'

As regarded my own views of the election of our cousin and friend to the post of President of the Ministry, I in no way concealed from myself that, in spite of his excellent intellectual gifts, his reign could not last long. 'To such a calling belong stability of views and actions, and the complete surrender of all private interests and convenience,'—I remarked to Albert on the 11th of August.

Born in the year 1804, Leiningen was in the very prime of life and in the zenith of his political consideration and influence. His activity for many years as Imperial Councillor in the Bavarian and Baden Parliaments, previous to the year 1848, had schooled him in parliamentary forms, and he

possessed what is called the courage of his opinions in the greatest degree. The early death of his father and the marriage of his mother with the Duke of Kent had caused him to spend the greater part of his youth in England, and thence he had in a certain measure formed English views. Yet he studied at Göttingen, and educated himself to a thorough knowledge of German law. The intellectual life of the German nation was in every way familiar to him, and he had many relations with the most important scientists and authors. Above all he was a great friend of Humboldt, through his intercourse with whom his familiarity with Berlin affairs had been increased.

He wrote very cleverly and with rare quickness; at the same time, in accordance with his whole temperament, he paid little attention to form. But he always showed himself to be sharp and correct in his judgment of persons and things, and was not easily inclined to illusions. If his letters had been collected, they would furnish a much stronger commentary on the events of the time than those of my brother, for his speech was very cutting on all occasions. He was more Southern German than Prussian in his views of the questions of the day, and often angered my brother by his injurious expressions concerning the importance of Prussia, which he would not admit against Germany. There were times when his pessimism rivalled that of King Leopold, to whom he had stood nearest of all the older members of the family.

Everything might have been expected of him sooner than a firm persistence in the same opinions—he seized an idea quickly and decidedly, but he let it go again with equal quickness. If he now proclaimed mediatisation, I was nevertheless far from believing that he was in a position to carry it out; but the consequence of this was, that most of the Princes of Germany had been filled with unconquerable mistrust of him, as well as against the whole Ministry of the Empire, and the National Assembly.—When they formally prescribed the transactions of Hanover, because the King had not agreed to the unconditional acceptance of the decisions concerning the Central Power in July, deep depression showed itself even amongst those Princes who would have been inclined to make sacrifices for the unity of Germany.

The Duke of Meiningen was accidentally present at a session of Parliament during which, amongst other things, the proposal was made to depose the King of Hanover and to declare his kingdom to be the property of the Empire. Almost at that same date the King of Würtemberg, the Grand-Dukes of Baden and Darmstadt, and the King of Bavaria were present in Frankfort.

The impressions with which the sovereigns went away are indescribable.—I found the Duke of Meiningen, who still lived amidst all the traditions of the strictest legitimacy of Princes, stiff with horror when he returned home. If the example of Hanover was not immediately followed by all, it was only because they were held back by fear and the momentary bad condition of things. Most of them regarded Prussia and Bavaria with real satisfaction, as they, along with the Government of Kurhesse, no longer neglected to strengthen and complete the particular elements in the army and also in the Representative Assembly.

Towards the end of July I was informed, from a very trustworthy source, that the King of Bavaria had established the closest relations with the Austrian Court, then staying at Innsbruck, and especially with that party which held all the threads of clerical and military reaction. An uninterrupted secret exchange of letters took place between Munich and Innsbruck through persons who were in the secret, such as Herr von Türkheim and others. The aristocracy and clergy had already joined hands in the Catholic South and East, in order to maintain the individual independence against the Central Power as strongly as possible. In Bavaria all hopes were set on the elections to Parliament, with the help of which they hoped to oppose the National Assembly.

In Prussia the opposition to the Frankfort extortions was shown in the order issued by the Central Power concerning the acceptance of the German colours by the armies. As is known the troops of all German States were to adopt the black, red and gold cockade, and through this symbol to pay a kind of homage to the Central Power. But even in liberal circles this demand had touched a point which aroused all the traditions of Prussian consciousness.

Thus, to my great regret, the Central Power had with its

first general measure obtained but very poor, indeed, almost shameful success on the whole. Nothing was more significant of this than the fact that my faithful attitude towards the Empire was not only represented in Frankfort on this occasion as a remarkably praiseworthy and pleasing event, but that they henceforth pointed me and other small sovereigns out, of whose necessary and speedy mediatisation and setting aside they were still convinced, as 'supporters of the Central Power.'

I succeeded in celebrating the 6th of August as solemnly as possible in Gotha. I had arranged a great people's festival on a heath in the neighbourhood of the town, and summoned my contingent of troops to it, as well as the men on active service. As I undertook the personal command of this large crowd of people, numbering about 10,000 persons, I made a speech which has remained valuable to me as a personal recollection of the day. The words were spoken at the front, where I had stationed myself on horseback, and did not fail to make an impression:

'In accordance with the expressed wish of our Administrator of the Empire, all German troops are to assemble around their Princes on this day, and, in unison with him, declare their readiness to give both blood and life in obedience to the ordinances of the Administration of the Empire.

'My heart beat high at this command, and, with the consciousness that not I *alone* in these meadows have the beautiful aim of the universal Fatherland before my eyes; I summoned all the men amongst my faithful people capable of carrying arms, besides the standing troops.

'My eye rests with pride and pleasure on this numerous company. So let us heartily proclaim that we are all Germans, and, like unto a brazen wall, will protect our beautiful Fatherland from the pressure of outside foes, just as, like a fiery sword, we will destroy those who attempt to insult our memories, our rights, our freedom.

'As a sign of your earnest intentions join me in the inspiriting cry: Long live the Administrator of the Empire!'

The national celebration in Gotha might be called brilliant. Numberless visits from neighbouring territories lent an importance to it which extended far beyond the Duchy. It had

not remained unknown to me that in Prussia and other kingdoms they had officially tried to suppress the rejoicings on the 6th of August. In contrast to this, Gotha was a spot well-situated for a demonstration, which had, for me, the two-fold aim of working against the democratic and republican proceedings in the Thuringian towns and particularly in Gotha, and to set—I will say—a good example to my princely neighbours.

It was well known to me that the Prussian War Minister von Schreckenstein had addressed a circular note to the Generals in command, in which the order of the Central Power concerning the adoption of the German cockade had been interpreted in a very odd manner. On command of the King, it said, the army was to receive the communication of the establishment of a German Central Power in accordance with existing circumstances, but any promulgation was especially to be most earnestly avoided on the 6th of August. Whereas the repugnance for the efforts in Frankfort was thus being fully expressed, Frederick William IV did not hesitate a few days later to meet the Administrator at the celebration of the building of the Cathedral in Cologne.

The meeting consequently assumed the character of a diplomatic game of chess, at which I was glad not to have accepted the opportunity of appearing. For on the arrival of the Frankfort deputation and the Ministry, at the torchlight procession of the citizens and at the table of Princes, everything was done in order to prove to the world the exceeding harmony which was supposed to exist between the King and his Archducal guests.

To the initiated, and particularly in military circles, it was no regret that the bridge between Berlin and Frankfort had been torn down since the 6th of August.

At the same time the delusions of the members of Parliament who inclined towards Prussia were remarkable. The only too well known words of Frederick William, with which he reminded the Representatives in the National Assembly, that there were still Princes in Germany, and that he also was one of them, were interpreted in a way which led to further doctrinary extortions. Gagern even asserted, in his reports of the Cathedral celebration made for the National Assembly,

that this utterance of the King's was to be taken only as an innocent jest, such as the witty man was fond of making.

The King was in reality decidedly opposed to all the programmes drawn up by the party of unity, and at that time I, as well as King Leopold, and my brother also, who was certainly well informed, was assured that he was not to be won over to the founding of Imperial territories in consequence of mediatisation, nor to the absorbtion of Prussia by Germany, but would at most give some support to the project formerly begun by his Ministry for the States Representative of seven of the German Princes in a Confederate Council. But he made this concession only in a very half-hearted manner, and the real significance was without doubt what I wrote at that time on the 11th of August 1848, to King Leopold:

'King, army, Ministry, and people are all pulling in different directions, and not one of the eminent men has consideration and decision enough to direct a blow of any importance whatever. Amongst these, I count the Prussian proposals for a representation in the Central Power. There is no doubt that Germany with a Central Power needs an organ of the individual States Governments in the National Assembly, and that even the provisory constitution of the Empire cannot well do without such a mediating body which can appease outside interests.

'In the law pertaining to the Central Power the need of a union between the Administrator of the Empire and the Individual Governments is recognised, and they have tried to obtain this by appointing embassies in Frankfort. Nevertheless, the Prussian proposal goes too far, and they wish to form a College of the States plenipotentiaries which can decree in opposition to the National Assembly. Agreeable to the purpose as it would be to see the senseless discord lessened between Prussia and the National Assembly, yet it is only too apparent that this proposal can by no means be carried out without consulting the National Assembly.'

As is known, Prussia's disinclination remained strong enough to hinder any vital institution of States representation to the Administrator of the Empire, and if one wished to consider the reasons for the failure of the idea of unity on

the whole, this circumstance was certainly one of the most evident of them. For the National Assembly became more and more fruitless in its one-sided democracy, and each fresh conflict with the individual States could not fail to reveal the powerlessness of the latter all the more clearly to the real politician.

Amidst these oppositions there now arose a question concerning the armistice which Prussia had agreed upon with Denmark at Malmöe, which was calculated to increase the bitterness to the utmost degree: In a particular chapter I will explain the affairs relating to Schleswig-Holstein in connection with other matters, and limit myself here to hints concerning these things in connection with the development of the National Assembly. It was during the last days in August, when the National Assembly undertook its first great errantry in the affairs of foreign politics, and it could not happen otherwise than that an immense gap should be made between their will and their ability.

The policy which Prince Leiningen and the Imperial Ministry first adopted with regard to external affairs, suffered from both children's complaints and senility. Of the men who would have known how to move on diplomatic ground there were none who could have taken charge of the affairs of the Embassy. Bunsen's duties prevented him from being in a position to accept an office in the Central Power, and Stockmar, who was always giving advice and making prophecies, was not further removed from anything than from really undertaking and co-operating in the matter.

The three envoys who were sent to the Great Powers were Auerswald, Raumer, and Andrian, excellent men to be sure, but without the necessary diplomatic past, and probably also without any future of the kind. Thus the failure inside the country had been added to the failure outside. At the end of August a number of embassies had been created, which, however, according to Heckscher's own declaration, had nothing more to do than to give official notice of the entrance into rule of the Administrator of the Empire, and to furnish explanations of the relations in Frankfort. Any serious foreign work on the part of the Ministry had, however, already been rendered impossible by the ceaseless interpola-

tions with which the National Assembly busied itself for days together. To these matters, discussed, in the eyes of all Europe, with so little dignity, the Schleswig armistice question belonged first of all.

The storm which arose concerning the latter, and which was to bring about the most lamentable events, burst forth in the National Assembly on the 4th of September. On the following day it was decided not to allow the Imperial troops to return to Schleswig-Holstein. All the members of the Imperial Ministry handed in their resignation. Dahlmann, whose critical spirit had succeeded in accomplishing the rejection of the armistice, had the courage to take upon himself the entire responsibility and burden of this affair, without being able to effect the formation of a new Cabinet.

At this moment of the greatest excitement in and outside of St Paul's Church, and on the eve of a frightful revolution, I entered Frankfort. I had for a long time had the intention of going there in person, in order to form an opinion of my own. As the situation daily assumed a more threatening character, I hastened my journey, arrived on the morning of the 6th of September, and, to my astonishment, found the Ministry overthrown.

I had had the particular intention of regulating some of the affairs pertaining to the Coburg contingent with General von Peucker as War Minister, now it was only possible for me to make observations on what had occurred, and to ascertain the state of helplessness in which they all were. For the greater part of the Deputies were concerned at their own victory, and the proposers of the cessation of the armistice knew least of all what should be done.

I paid my respects to the Administrator of the Empire on the same day, was with Leiningen for some time, and paid Gagern a visit. I learned from my cousin that England, France and Russia had sent threatening letters, and demanded unconditionally of the Imperial Government that the conditions of the Malmöe armistice were to be complied with. The hopes of the Ministry were set on the fact that Dahlmann, who had overthrown it, would not be able to form a new Cabinet, and that they might therefore hope to make up the difference of twenty votes, with which Dahlmann had won,

when the principal question was voted for. Besides, Leiningen showed but little desire to continue the direction of affairs.

When I went to the Administrator of the Empire, I found him more composed than I had imagined he would be, after what had been told me. He spoke rather quietly about the decision arrived at by the National Assembly, on the preceding day, and had worked out a system in which he blamed Prussia as sharply as possible, but which he asserted would assure the carrying out of the armistice: 'The question of a war with Denmark,' said he, 'must by all means be separated from the question of Prussia's conduct. The armistice must be accepted, although Prussia has gone beyond her full power.'

He then began to speak of Prussia with great anger, and I noticed that it came from his heart when he judged Prussia's conduct from the worst point of view. It angered him especially that of the three conditions, under which the Central Power had conferred the authority to conclude the armistice, not a single one had been considered. It was not difficult to see that the Administrator of the Empire regarded this omission as an intentional neglect of his person and position. He was confirmed in this by the fact that the envoy of the Imperial Administration had been purposely deceived by General von Below, on pretence of secret instructions having arrived from Berlin.

Greatly as the Archduke John gave vent to his Prussian antipathy, and greatly as he showed a kind of sympathy for the insulted National Assembly, yet he appeared to be entirely ignorant of everything which should have been done without delay. It was hoped that Heckscher's retirement from the Ministry would lull the storm in St Paul's, and that the remaining Ministers could be retained. The long and stormy session of the National Assembly, at which I was present on the following day, did not make the impression upon me that quiet days were to be expected.

In the part of St Paul's where I had a place, I was glad to see several old acquaintances, such as Erbach, Fürstenberg and Lichnowsky, as well as Radowitz and my old tutor Löbell of Bonn, whose instructive information helped me through the meaningless phrases of most of the speakers, and

the frightful contentions between Wesendonck, Vogt and President Gagern. As on the second day also these scandalous proceedings, which they assured me were not the rule, were not calculated to give me any better opinion of the future of Germany, I left Frankfort, going on the 10th of September with a feeling of real comfort but full of the greatest disappointment as well.

I had talked with and become acquainted with a great many persons. At the house of the Consort of the Administrator of the Empire, the Baroness von Brandhof, I again met the latter, and he drew me into a conversation about the Ministerial crisis. He asked nothing less than that I should use my influence with Stockmar and get him to form a new Ministry. In this I could not fail to perceive a want of knowledge of the persons with whom the Administrator had any dealings, and at once felt doubtful of the possibility of a new Ministry. Stockmar laughingly assured me immediately afterwards that it would never occur to him to assent to such a desire on the part of the Administrator of the Empire, he even said that it would now be the best thing for Prince Leiningen to withdraw, as he would not soon find a more favourable opportunity of doing so.

As is known, Leiningen retired from office, although the Malmöe armistice was afterwards ratified by the National Assembly, and Herr von Schmerling undertook the Presidency. I described the impressions produced upon me by everything —perhaps somewhat strongly—in a letter to my brother, which strikes me to-day as being a historical document, and therefore to be published here, on account of the main point; but the reader must remember that the pressure and excitement of the moment caused me to use many a harsher word than I should perhaps have done if only taking a calmly retrospective view:

'DEAR ALBERT,—As I presume that you are aware of my stay here from Alexandrina's letter to Victoria, you will no doubt excuse me if I only give you hasty sketches of the immense impressions which the state of things here has made upon me.

'The aim of my journey was to bespeak certain matters

with the Ministers and individual Deputies, particularly our own, which regard Saxon interests only. The fall of Leiningen's Ministry, and the frightfully pregnant crisis, naturally altered many things in my plan of operations. I have got into the midst of the agitation, through my acquaintance with most of the men of the day, and the good feeling which is entertained for me here gave me an opportunity on the one hand of becoming *thoroughly* acquainted with the existing state of things, and on the other of exercising some influence over them. It is impossible for me to write *more* at present; but I will give you the following sketches:

'1. Ministry.—Want of all vitality and therefore a speedy downfall. Karl, with Peucker, is the only one who is now personally sufficient. The others are nearly all unfitted for being Ministers under present circumstances. There are long lists of perverse actions which those gentlemen performed with rare coolness.

'2. National Assembly.—A company of men who for the one part either do not understand their task, nor for the other how they ought to behave in Parliament. Individually great capacity, but they think they can *work* separately, and, because they alone wish to shine, to eclipse one another and raise themselves. A Right and a Left, but no regular party. No regular leader and no party fidelity. The Ministry fell principally because a few fools—even if Dahlmann is catalogued with them—in order to have themselves pitied as martyrs, wished to belong to the minority, and so overcame the Assembly by their speeches that they obtained a majority, and overthrew their own Ministry. They now stand on the ruins and cannot possibly form a Ministry from *this* majority.

'All Germany is in anxious suspense. I have attended frightful sessions. I understand now why Stockmar will not belong to this Ministry at any price; he cannot wish to have anything in common with such people as we have here.

'3. Administrator of the Empire.—He is not trusted. I cannot say whether this is right or wrong.

'The people here have no conception of real politics, of the manner in which one must hold intercourse with Foreign Powers. One's hair stands on end when one thinks what we

are coming to, if they continue as they are now doing. Many, it is true, are only beginning to see, and they are horrified at themselves, but many are blind from arrogance and self-interest.

'I have wished you here with your calm understanding, in order to cure their blindness. When you see Karl again, remind him of this period and you will find a confirmation of what I have written.—Your

'ERNEST.

'*Frankfort, September* 8, 1848.'

My gloomy views of things in Frankfort were in a few days to be confirmed in a manner which was terrible beyond all expectation. If, on the 16th of September, the crafty majority of St Paul's had arrived at the decision not to hinder the completion of the armistice of Malmöe, it was no longer secure from the elements which the Left had figuratively and openly called forth. That to which, in Parliament, under the name of republican and democratic principles, they shamefacedly tried to give the appearance of a legal battle, had been already fully unveiled before the parliamentary simpletons on the 17th and laid the naked revolution bare to the light of day. The arguments which had not been able to gain a victory in the war of speeches at the eleventh hour, were to be made clear to the conservative and honourable men in this unlucky Assembly by the fists of the rabble.

They were only able by means of a trick to save the members of the Right from the masses waiting at the gates for them to leave St Paul's, making them go out through a side exit which was left unguarded, thus outwitting the friends of the republican Left.

On the 17th of September the republican unions in Frankfort had sent a petition to the National Assembly, in which they demanded the decision regarding the armistice to be cancelled. All those who had voted for it, said the petition, were traitors to their country. When the session of Parliament was opened on the 18th, armed crowds of people pressed into the church, but were driven back by Gagern's presence of mind; but barricades were raised outside.

In the night between the 17th and 18th, Hessian, Prussian

and Austrian troops were sent for from Mainz, who on the following noon were able to master the agitation without shedding blood. In the afternoon, however, the fight began to assume a more serious and general aspect; not the tenth part of the militia had assembled to protect the National Assembly, on the contrary, there were many who sided with the rioters, amongst whom there were even members of the parliamentary Left.

Accustomed as people at that time were to scenes of horror, yet, as I had seen and spoken to so many of the threatened men only a week before, I was deeply moved by the news from Frankfort. Hardly had the first intelligence of the rapacious attack on the National Assembly been spread, before it was followed by the news of the death of Auerswald and Lichnowsky. I shall never forget those moments, and although the thrilling events are well known, yet it will perhaps be of more than personal value if I introduce here a few of the accurate descriptions which my well-informed and quiet observer in Frankfort sent me, derived from his own immediate experience:

'After the session,' von Meyern informed me on the 18th, at four o'clock in the afternoon, 'the game became somewhat more serious. At the entrance of the Hasengasse * a barricade had been raised—the *Heckerlied* sounded from behind it. The Austrian sappers charged, and it was splendid to see how the white coats assaulted it and the rebels did honour to the name of the street. Not a shot had as yet been fired. But this did not last long, and near the Catholic church, from behind a new barricade, they shot two Austrians dead. A discharge in files was the reply. The result is as yet unknown.

'I went away to the *Roman Emperor*, to dine with Head Marshal Wangenheim. About 150 paces from here, where the line is extended to two small streets, two barricades, larger than the first were built. A Prussian detachment stationed itself underneath the *Roman Emperor*. They were derided from the barricade, but did not move. Some of them were shot dead before my eyes by men in the houses armed with rifles; they did not move. At length they were allowed to shoot. A few discharges in files scattered the insurgents;

* Hare Street or Lane.

but from behind the barricades and the windows several more of their men were wounded with rifle bullets at a good distance. The Prussians could do nothing without sappers and cannons. In order to avoid unnecessary losses they withdrew to the side of the street. Smoking my cigar on the balcony of the *Roman Emperor*, I heard a bullet whistle before my nose, and—my cigar was out, for the bullet had cut it in two.

'The poor wounded men who are lying downstairs are universally pitied. I saw one of the poor fellows die very tranquilly. To-day, towards evening, about 10,000 men will be here, Würtemberg artillery, troops from Nassau, Grand-Ducal Hessian troops, and auxiliaries from Mainz. Early to-morrow morning the cowardly mass of democrats, who are always running away in the open streets, will have escaped by every possible exit. The only consequence will be that the National Assembly will be removed to Nüremberg, of which many are already talking.'

'*Frankfort, 19th September, early in the morning.*

'YOUR HIGHNESS, MOST GRACIOUS DUKE AND SOVEREIGN.—It is a sad duty which I have to perform, when I address myself to Your Highness in my budget of to-day, in order to announce the sad fate of Prince Lichnowsky. He was mortally wounded yesterday evening in a most cruel manner, and can hardly have lived through the night. He was so rash as to ride out to meet General Auerswald of the Würtemberg Artillery, and at the Eschenheimer Gate he fell into the hands of a band of democrats, who at once shot after the two riders, and wounded Lichnowsky, their sworn foe, "whose entrails," they had sworn in the People's Assembly of the day before yesterday, "to strew in the streets." Driven to straits, they jumped down from their horses and fled into a house. But here, unarmed as they were, they were seized; old General Auerswald was beaten to death with cudgels, and Lichnowsky—it is too revolting—Lichnowsky, the valiant was held by two of these assassins and shot through the body by a third at a distance of two paces.

'With this death wound, and arms almost cut in pieces besides a wound in the head, they carried him—I do not

know how it came to pass—to Bethmann's, where he is said to have related the whole scene: "They have shot me," such are said to have been his words,—"but poor Auerswald—I cannot speak about it." Yesterday evening he was said to be lying unconscious and beyond hope in the hospital.* It is so revolting, that the occurrences in the city are almost driven into the background.

'After I had carried my yesterday's budget to the post, the firing ceased. Representatives belonging to the Left thought it right as Members of Parliament to go to the barricades in order to mediate. There was an armistice until half-past six o'clock. Meanwhile troops arrived from all sides, also Darmstadt and Würtemberg artillery as well as cavalry. Nevertheless the impudent insurgents demanded the withdrawal of the troops outside of the city. "You have no conditions whatever to make," General Nobili, the commander, is said to have answered the barricade envoys, and sent them back at once. All the blood which may be shed is naturally laid to his account.

'After the expiration of the respite for parley, they broke up the barricades at the entrance to the street with a few cannon shots,—as I was again able to witness from the balcony of the *Roman Emperor*—and stormed them with Prussian and Darmstadt infantry.

'Herr von Boddien, now adjutant to the Archduke, rode in several times amongst the insurgents, and on one occasion received a whole discharge in file from them. The firing in the streets of the more distant quarters of the city lasted until nearly 11 o'clock in the evening, then everything grew quiet. Frankfort has been declared in a state of siege by the Imperial Ministry, and a court-martial has been announced. I heard it read aloud in the English Court amidst great rejoicing. It was necessary.

'The poor troops, in thick masses in the streets—almost defenceless, one may say—were shot down, and they—took prisoners, who will *perhaps* be some day condemned to imprisonment. Our German troops are awfully good-natured, as I have had an opportunity of noticing. Yester-

* Lichnowsky was staying at Bethmann's and was carried there at his own request.

day evening the Prussians had one officer, Captain Jürgens, killed, and a second one wounded; the Darmstadters had a staff officer severely wounded, shot through the body, and a second one wounded. The Kurhessian battalion, now the Fuldaer, were not trusted, and were kept back.

'Lieutenant von Griesheim, of Mainz, with whom I spoke in the evening in the English Court, made an excursion yesterday to Hanau, with fifty men, tore up the rails there, in order to prevent a new relay from this abode of robbers, and on the way back, captured a perfect den of robbers in a village in which they shot at his men; his men spiked a Pole, and captured six ringleaders, amongst them a Frankforter militiaman in uniform, who had shot with them. As regards the Frankfort militia generally, my opinion of them has been confirmed; at the general march not one-tenth appeared, and several were seen behind the barricades. Also representatives on the extreme Left are said to have been recognised amongst the insurgents. The Prussians also arrested a stranger at the *Roman Emperor*, who had the impudence to shoot out of one of the windows.

'Everything appears quiet this morning. The Prussian Deputies are holding a conference, and the National Assembly will continue in the right course.

'With the deepest respect, etc.,

'VON MEYERN.'

In a letter which followed, von Meyern told me that, besides Auerswald and Lichnowsky, old Jahn had also been chased and wounded by the insurgents. Heckscher, however, who had remained in Soden on the 18th, was only dragged out of the railway carriage and roughly handled. His clothes were torn from his body, and the escort saved him at the risk of their own lives, and got him to Mainz. At the attack on St Paul's, eighteen members of the Right, amongst whom was Gagern, were on the list of the proscribed. Finally, Meyern informed me, as the worst example of the horrible fanaticism, that it was a woman who had shown the murderers Lichnowsky's hiding-place. The frightful woman struck him furiously on the head with her parasol as he lay dying and deserted on the ground. Considering the relations which I

had had for so many years with Lichnowsky, one can imagine what an impression this news made upon me. I had a feeling of honest friendship for the much slandered, valiant martyr of the German Revolution. In spite of his eccentric manners he had something gentle and very sympathetic about him. During my stay in Frankfort, I once had an opportunity of seeing how well known and greatly hated the Prince was. For, as he was accompanying me home late in the evening from an entertainment at Bethmann's, we were presently surrounded by a mass of people, who gave loud utterance to their dislike of the Prince. I tried to get him quickly away from this suspicious company, and did not fail to represent to him the dangers by which he was surrounded, if he continued to exasperate the democrats in his old way.

I have kept the last letter which he wrote me, and which was probably the last one he wrote at all. His words, which showed a remarkable presentiment, reached me almost at the same time I received the news of his death. One cannot read of his intention to start for Berlin on the 18th of September without deep emotion, 'providing the events in Frankfort did not prove too much for him.' I will contribute what I can towards the memory of the brave warrior by repeating his words here. It had occurred to me to prepare a surprise for him on my return from Frankfort by sending him the Order of the Ernestine House. He answered:

'MOST GRACIOUS SIR,—I have had the honour of receiving Your Highness's gracious letter of the 14th. The Order which Your Highness has been pleased to bestow upon me, and which Herr von Meyern brought me, will always remain a valuable pledge of the sentiments which you, most gracious sir, express so amiably in your letter, and on which I set a high value. I beg Your Highness to allow me to express my warmest thanks here for both.

'Herr von Meyern will have furnished information of the important day yesterday, and the session of twelve hours. It was the painfully won victory of healthy reason and order over insanity and subversion. The Dahlmann and Herrmann combination was already choked at the very outset; a patching up of the former Cabinet was shown to be impossible

yesterday. Consequently a complete Prussian Cabinet is possible, as yesterday proved more than anything the victory of Prussian predominance, to which the two deputies of Your Highness's division manfully and honestly contributed your part.—Gagern also seems to realise this, for my departure is fatal to him, and on his advice the Archduke sent this morning for Count Schwerin.—Nevertheless, I shall not let myself be detained, and go early to-morrow to Potsdam, and thence to Silesia. I expect to return in from ten to twelve days, and shall then, if events do not prove too much for me, pay my respects to Your Highness in Gotha. This is all that I can say to-day. We had a riot yesterday; to-day a still hotter edition is expected. Laying myself respectfully at the feet of Her Highness the Duchess, I remain with sincere attachment, Your Highness' most obedient servant, 'F. LICHNOWSKY.'

Before the mail left Lichnowsky had added a leaf to the letter, in which he made a request of me regarding a private matter, and closed as follows:

'Things look bad in Berlin and Potsdam. There have been excesses amongst the Cuirassier Guards.—They are talking of an interim-Cabinet here, and then of a Gagern Ministry. *Nous verrons!*

'*Frankfort, September* 17, *Evening.*'

My brother, who, as will be remembered, had formerly mistrusted Lichnowsky on account of his Spanish adventures, pleased me by the acknowledgment which he paid the fallen man:

'Little as I used to like Lichnowsky's proceedings, yet I have always greatly admired his talents as a speaker, and his political courage, a gift which is more rare than any other in our times, and his dreadful end moved me deeply. It is to be hoped that severe measures will now be adopted against the agitators, otherwise one stone will not be left upon the other, and the misery will become unbounded.'

The Imperial Ministry, after the rising in September in Frankfort, had the most praiseworthy intentions of providing for the restoration of order in the different parts of Germany, where the measures of the respective Governments did not

appear sufficient; unfortunately, as regarded this, there was a total want of co-operation of united will and successful execution of suitable measures amongst the public authorities. In no way supported by the territorial authorities, in open conflict with Prussia, the combined Imperial troops were never directed to the right spot, and in many lands, particularly in Thuringia, they aroused the suspicion that they were only serving to put in practice the intentions of mediatisation entertained by the National Assembly.

Whilst open insurrection ruled in different parts of the Prussian monarchy, the inhabitants of neighbouring lands felt themselves burdened and inconvenienced by the Imperial troops, without considering their presence necessary. In the kingdom of Saxony the internal dissolution was making ever increasing progress, but the mobilised corps of the Imperial army lay in the Saxon Duchies. In Baden, the invasion of the Struwesian volunteers had been repulsed by the native troops before the arrival of the Imperial contingent, at the time of and in connection with the uprising in Frankfort, and when they arrived they were as little able to prevent the secret activity of the revolutionary propaganda there as in Hesse and the Palatine.

It was a remarkable time; whilst the uselessness of princes was being preached and demonstrated in almost every spot, the plenipotentiaries of the moment could not understand that nothing could be done, unless legitimate and historical activity of rule went hand in hand with the founding of new Powers and new institutions.

CHAPTER XI

PRESSURE ON THE IMPERIAL MINISTRY OF THE GREAT POWERS OF GERMANY.—THE AUSTRIAN COURT AND GOVERNMENT DRIVEN TO OLMUTZ.—SCHWARZENBERG ASSUMES THE CONTROL OF AFFAIRS.—PROGRAMME OF THE NEW MINISTRY.—SECRET INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ARCHDUKE.—COUNT BRANDENBURG.—THE DUKE'S PERSONAL FEELINGS TOWARDS THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—RIVALRY BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA.—GAGERN'S LEADERSHIP.—SCHEME FOR THE ELECTION OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—GENERAL OPPOSITION.—VON STEIN ON THE CRISIS.—THE DUKE'S LETTER TO FREDERICK WILLIAM.—URGES HIM TO HEAD THE FATHERLAND.—AUSTRIA NEGOTIATING WITH HANOVER.—HUMILIATION OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA.—PRINCE ALBERT'S COMMENTS.—LAST ACT OF THE FRANKFORT IMPERIAL TRAGEDY.—RECALL OF THE PRUSSIAN DEPUTIES.—GRAVELL'S ABSURD MANIFESTOES.—ESCAPE OF THE ARCHDUKE FROM FRANKFORT.—HIS SUBTERFUGE.—THE SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN WAR.—POPULARITY OF DUKE ERNEST.—WHIMSICAL APPEAL TO HIM TO ASSUME THE LEADERSHIP.

THERE could only be talk of an independent action on the part of the Imperial Ministry, in so far as the two great Powers of Germany left it the necessary elbow-room. As long as the state of things in Prussia and Austria hindered any decided activity on the part of the Governments, and in Berlin, as well as in Vienna, the keeping up of the State appeared to be placed in question every day. They could still lull themselves to rest with illusions in Frankfort, as if the Central Power really had a certain moral and material support in the convictions of all the great land of Germany.

All these illusions in St Paul's were dispelled by the events in Austria and Prussia during October and November. Whilst the two great Powers were strengthening themselves internally, stifling the Revolution in their midst, recovering, as it was, that which they had lost, the universal doctrinary discussions in Frankfort concerning a future Germany as-

sumed a serious political aspect. Then, when one spoke of the predominance of Prussia, of Austria's position in Germany, of the hereditary or election Empire question, it had been given a foundation in so far that, as a politically thoughtful man could really conceive, the one might be expected of this or that Power, and the other not.

In Austria after the October storms which had driven the Court and the Government to the fortress of Olmütz, Prince Felix Schwarzenberg assumed the control of affairs on the 21st of November. Through this energetic man Austrian politics at length again assumed a decided direction and colour, they were able in Germany to count on a real factor. The Ministry which Schwarzenberg had formed appeared before the public on the 27th of November with a programme in which it declared that it was its task to unite all the lands and races of the monarchy in one State body. 'This point of view,' it continued, 'points out at the same time the way in the German question; only when rejuvenated Austria and rejuvenated Germany have assumed new and settled forms, will it be possible to decide upon their mutual relations. Until then Austria will continue faithfully to perform her duties as a member of the Confederacy.'

This announcement appeared to raise some hope that an understanding between Germany and Austria was possible, but what Prince Schwarzenberg had understood in the words 'rejuvenated Germany' was only later to be realised with horror. That, however, Austria's aims were diametrically opposed to all that which had formerly been denoted in Frankfort, first by the decisive expression of the larger States Confederation, and soon afterwards by the name of the Gagern programme, could not long be concealed even from the most incorrigible Optimists.

I had been able to obtain complete information of these opposite tendencies in the course of Bavarian politics, from an attentive observer in Munich. How far, meanwhile, the Archduke in Frankfort was aware of the recession of the Schwarzenberg policy from the ways of every party which naturally wished to maintain its place in the National Assembly is more than I should like to decide.

As the Administrator of the Empire and his Ministerial

President were able to keep their negotiations with Schwarzenberg a complete secret, it was not possible to see through the ways of the Austrian Government in Frankfort; but in the end it could not but remain the same thing for the issue of events, whether the Administrator of the Empire was only deceived or whether he himself was taking an active part in the game of the Schwarzenberg policy. Under any circumstances the task consisted in so interpreting Austria's promised fidelity to the Confederacy, that the Archduke should maintain the Austrian position in Frankfort as long as possible, until the proper time arrived for the real views of Austria to be brought forward.

The relations of the Frankfort parties to the new Prussian Ministry had developed otherwise, and, if one may so put it, more honourably. For when, after the short Pfuel-Eichmann Ministry, Count Brandenburg undertook the formation of a Ministry on the 2nd of November, his first task consisted in ensuring the Continuance of the Prussian monarchy according to the Constitution, but he was also decided not to let the German question drop.

With a complete understanding of the wants of Prussia, Count Brandenburg had a warm heart for Germany, and seriously intended to perform the duties of Prussia towards her in a more complete manner than had hitherto been done. As his plenipotentiary Camphausen in Frankfort at once began to exercise a more serious influence, the hopes of the party of unity at St Paul's who sympathised with Prussia rose greatly. When, on the 9th of November, Count Brandenburg appeared at the Berlin Parliament and read a Royal message which ordered the removal of the Assembly to Brandenburg, where the session was to be resumed on the 27th, a feeling of ease spread throughout Germany, of having a great weight removed, everyone thought that Prussia would at length collect herself and was preparing to take a great step.

I will not go into particulars here; it is known how the Prussian National Assembly was broken up, and the Constitution of the 5th of December was granted. Count Brandenburg's intentions only partly suited the King from the beginning. Prussia's misfortune was the union of the Ministerial Presi-

dency with a man who was much more in accordance with the sentiments of the King than the latter himself.

In order to carry out the measures mentioned, Count Brandenburg needed an unscrupulous colleague for internal matters, and such a one would perhaps be difficult to find outside the circles of those men, who were just beginning to transform the really good traditions of the Prussian official circles and the army into a political programme of reaction. In this new party the Manteuffels played a part which was well pleasing to the King and which enabled the Minister of the Interior, chosen by Count Brandenburg himself, to exercise an influence over German matters which incessantly crossed the wishes of the President of the Ministry.

During the unhappy months of the year 1848 the party had been able to weave a net around the entire Court, and as they were only half sure of the King personally, they took all the greater care to remove all influences which might work upon Frederick William in opposition to them. Lichnowsky, who was trusted by the party, informed me that they had also chosen me as an object of attack with the King, and the same thing was afterwards told me by the other side. They tried with extraordinary skill to prevent all those persons particularly from having any intercourse with the King, who threatened to alter his attitude of aversion in the much hated German question.

I by no means had, as my brother so often reproached me, a feeling of personal mistrust towards the King, and still less did I dislike him, I was even very much on his side. But when one reflected that one of the leaders of that party of the Ministry of the Interior now led, and possessed every means of influencing the King, one could not possibly cherish the hope that an understanding could be arrived at between Frankfort and Prussia. Under these circumstances one could not oppose a union with other Great Powers, when such a union could promote the insurance of State order.

As the idea of the Ducal Saxon military contingent with the Royal Saxon army had therefore been brought forward at that time in the National Assembly, I made no opposition, as has already been said in another chapter. Indeed, I did not conceal from myself, that in case Saxony did not remain

faithfully German, a concurrence would be formed by the annexation of Thuringia by the Prussian State which might become very dangerous to the establishment of unity in Germany.

Meanwhile the rivalry in Frankfort between the aspirants of Austria and Prussia had given rise to a strange state of things, which was to become extremely fatal. Instead of the restoration of order in the large States becoming a signal for the possibility of the formation of a Conservative Party which would insist upon the unity of the Kingdom, nearly all divisions of Parliament let themselves be moved to raise an abominable clamour at the reaction, and no one had the courage definitely to cast aside the cant of freedom. Even the Imperial Ministry did not dare to go straight forward, but always acted as if it had to support the freedom of Austria and Prussia in the matter, and must be the watchman of the so-called universal improvement.

Entirely undiplomatic missions to the Austrian and Prussian Governments were sent, at least apparently, so that the Imperial Ministry should not loose the support of the whole, or half of the Left. They did not recoil before the most desperate measures to gain their end. Thus, one rightly had a feeling that Austria would hardly be inclined, after they had allowed Blum to be shot, to negotiate much with his colleagues.

A man of rank was therefore needed in order to keep up the consideration for Imperial Government desired by Parliament, and the idea occurred to them to send my cousin to Olmütz. Without having asked him beforehand, they attempted to force instructions upon him, which would forever have made a man experienced in foreign politics ridiculous, and he therefore, declared his inability to accept them. Nevertheless the Ministry boasted of its unlucky idea to the National Assembly, and explained its entire willingness to inform the House of the instructions laid before Prince Leiningen. Prince Leiningen's nomination was really made public in the official Post-Office organ, without the latter having given his consent.

Still more remarkable was their attitude in regard to Prussian affairs, when the Ministry appeared to be almost in

emulation of the Left in anxiety concerning the Berlin National Assembly which had formerly been so striven against. They sent Imperial commissioners to the Prussian Government, demanding the removal of the Houses to Berlin!

People imagined that they could perceive a certain amount of mischievous joy against Prussia on the Ministers' bench, when the most nonsensical proposals were made in Parliament, as, for example, the collection of the Imperial troops against Prussia; the instructions to the war Minister to carry into effect, to this end, the raising of the contingents of the smaller and middle States within twice twenty-four hours; or the demand that the Imperial commissioners in Berlin were to bring about the appointment of a Ministry there, which would possess the confidence of the country, and much more of the same kind. It is true that follies of the kind were suppressed by the National Assembly itself, but the moral fall of the great Assembly was more perceptible every day.

A more compact majority of Prussian envoys and those who sided with Prussia was only formed very gradually, under Gagern's leadership.

The latter had gone to Berlin at the end of November, and on his return it was thought in Frankfort that an understanding had been established between him and the Prussian Government. But whereas the tendencies towards the founding of a Prussian-German Empire appeared to be strengthened, a decision had been arrived at by Austria and Bavaria to blow up the whole proud edifice of new Imperial unity at any price. Towards this end the Austrian and Ultramontane Deputies in St Paul's were partly drawn into service, and partly the Administrator of the Empire himself. The latter had, indeed, to submit to Schmerling's withdrawal from the Ministry, and, good or bad, to accept a Cabinet under Gagern's presidency which was inclined towards Prussia, but, with the help of an alliance between the extreme Left and the Austrians, they hoped to make the Constitution as democratic and the new throne to be raised as uncomfortable for King Frederick William IV as possible.

It will be of interest to insert here a piece of information from von Meyern, who, in the middle of December, a few days before the accession of Gagern to the Ministry, described the

general position to me in a way which, I think, was most correct:

'With regard to the future Head of the Empire, and the definite Constitution of Germany in general connection with this matter, and also the relation of Austria to Germany, much has recently been done in secret here. The result which I have been able to make out of the present condition of the matter, according to the most varied information, and what Privy Imperial Councillor Kohlschütter confirmed and explained to me to-day, is pretty much as follows:

'The committee for the Constitution, having reached the paragraph relating to the Head of the Empire in the Bill for the Constitution, has again chosen a sub-committee for a preliminary consultation. This committee, in which are Dahlmann, Beseler, and I think Droysen, also, has finished its work and has gone back in it to the hereditary Empire, which is to be conferred on the Prussian dynasty. The *National Assembly* is to elect, the King of Prussia is to accept, and the opposition of the other States must give way before the *fait accompli*, whilst Austria will be left out of this States Confederation provided with a Prussian Head. The States of second rank are to be compensated in an Imperial Council, which would support the Emperor only with their advice.

'This idea is, like the continuation of the "bold grasp," to be seen in the self-election of the National Assembly, together with that of Gagern. Gagern, with his centres, would also provide a majority for it in the National Assembly, although the left (the March union with 140 votes) would oppose it on account of the hereditary Empire, and the Right (Vincke with forty votes) on account of the self-election and the want of union.

'Not only inside, but outside the National Assembly, it is opposed by the most important hindrances. First of all, the King of Prussia himself, whom Gagern tried in Berlin to induce to accept, has made his consent dependent upon the consent of the remaining German reigning Houses. Gagern is also said to have returned from Berlin with the supposition that the King would suspend the Prussian Constitution until the proclamation of the one here, in order then to be able to

accept the German Constitution for Prussia along with the German crown. Gagern alone appears to consider the granting of a Prussian Constitution, which has meantime become necessary, as no hindrance to the main point, and must also have hopes that the King, once elected by the National Assembly, will *accept*, as, since his return from Berlin, he is said to be working for the idea more zealously than ever.

'Further, according to the newspapers, Austria is said to be *opposed* to her exclusion from Germany in favour of Prussian predominence, and, what is more, to have had her claims to equal rights for her German States with the other German States founded on the Confederate Act, and her views of the bond which is moreover to bind all German States without exception more closely, openly asserted through an Archduke. This would therefore, in any case, be a States Confederation, even if more closely united, which Gervinus prophesied as being the Austrian policy in his Article of the 6th inst., in the supplement to the German newspaper.

'But, finally, Bavaria and the other South German Powers of second and third rank, already known to be inimical to Prussian predominence, particularly under the form of a hereditary Empire, are said to be quite decided against the self-election of the National Assembly, and as they are thoroughly informed of what will be advised in this respect, intend soon—as Herr Kohlschütter tells me—in order to protect themselves against the proposed *fait accompli*, to lay a declaration before the National Assembly, in which they will demand the exercise of their rights to the union.

'According to what Herr Kohlschütter asserts, Hanover appears to be in harmony with Bavaria (and Austria) regarding this. He does not speak openly about Saxony especially, but gives one to understand that she will also take part in this, as, shrugging his shoulders, he said: "One could not but deplore the fact that the pious wish for German unity would not be fulfilled; but there was no help for it, as one must go with those who would last the longest." Thus, nothing great could ever be arrived at!

'Even the Foreign diplomatists here are said to have intimated that their Cabinets would interfere and not agree to

Prussian predominence. As regards the small States, the Powers of secondary rank appear to expect that they would strike in this difference on the side of Prussian predominence. The Powers of secondary rank had the intention of proposing, with Austria, a Confederate Directory in place of the Head of the Empire. As a final blow, Herr von Blittersdorff thought it necessary to nominate himself as Chief Defender of the Gagern idea, his name alone being sufficient to injure it more than any Power would do. Von Arnim belongs with him to its supporters.'

To the difficulties mentioned in the above information, which were expected to beset the Prussian Empire, I may add that, since the 2nd of December 1848, the ascension of the throne by the son of the Archduke Charles and the abdication of the Emperor Ferdinand, gave rise to the thought of an Austro-German Empire in circles inclined towards Austria.

Although Austria's introduction into the limits of a German Constitution was daily shown to be more difficult and impossible in Parliamentary negotiations, yet the Austrians by no means thought of receding from their position, and since the middle of December, even the Administrator of the Empire, throwing aside the veil of German patriotism with ever increasing abandon, showed himself as the representative of Austrian interests and intentions. His position with regard to the Gagern Ministry chosen by him, or rather, pressed upon him, was most singular, and only to be imagined at a time when people were accustomed to see the most opposite and unnatural elements side by side and working together.

Complete pessimism with the one, new hopes of revolution and anarchy with the others, were the consequences of the schism between the Administrator of the Empire and his Ministry. The observations which Herr von Stein found an opportunity of imparting to me during his stay in Frankfort before Christmas were very interesting: .

'Our whole German question has again reached a bad crisis, and if a solution is not soon arrived at, contrary to hope, a complete sundering is inevitable, and even a worse than before. Prince Leiningen, as well as the old experienced diplomatist Smidt von Bremen, told me, that they could

form no idea whatever as to how the united Fatherland would be brought about; a German Diet appeared to be more acceptable to both for the time being than the Imperial Diet; the settlement of the Imperial Constitution appears to be highly doubtful.

'They think it possible that a provisory Head for three years would suffice, that the present Administrator of the Empire should make way for the King of Prussia, and that the latter would only be elected by a small majority for a time. Prince Leiningen, who unfortunately went to Karlsruhe yesterday, is very gloomy, believes that the particular interests are being brought forward more and more, that the revolutionary scenes will be repeated, and that anarchy is prevalent in many circles, already sees the Empire falling, and therefore advises for the present that there be no absorption by it; but that the less powerful Princes of Germany should seek a point of support in the inner union, or in annexation to more powerful States.

'The Thuringian alliance pleased him, although he is of the opinion that an annexation to the Crown of Saxony would be preferable, as the privileged position of Prince of the House would seem to be more certainly assured. The immediate province of the Empire was only mentioned before me as a requisite spot, in which the Imperial Diet might hold its sessions.

'The *soirée* given by the Administrator of the Empire yesterday evening, and which was largely attended by the Deputies and diplomatists, came just at the right time, but made the comical impression upon me of a gathering of passers-by in the common room of a post-office, or the waiting-room of a railway station, for the fate of everything earthly shone forth only too plainly, and the unsafety of the provisory government was perceptible, at least to me, in the entertainment.

'I spoke with nearly all the Ministers and Deputies. The person of the Administrator of the Empire is perhaps too unimportant, and his wife's presence in the drawing-room could not improve it. Smiling satirically, I met Minister Nothomb in the crowd, who, on his way from Berlin to Brussels, is staying here for a few days. He is not distrustful

of Prussian affairs, and is at least expecting something fit to eat from the German kitchen here. To see Radowitz and Vogt of Giessen engaged in a long and eager conversation would have been laughable, if it had not furnished a melancholy picture of the path taken by the groups in Parliament; both extremes are striving against reason, and have the common wish that nothing may be accomplished.'

As Gagern's Ministry, now barely two weeks old, has begun to waver a great deal during the past few days, Herr von Stein remarked that it was a question whether another Ministry could be formed at all. 'As a lure,' he wrote, '2000 florins monthly have been voted for the Ministry, but it would be more advisable to pay them by the week.'

It may be seen that at the end of the year, with regard to the German question, a kind of humour made itself felt which promised to put a quick end to things. Meantime worse was to come, for time had been granted the Parliament really to complete the work of the Constitution by the temporising attitude of the Austrian and Bavarian Government. The impossibility of carrying it out was not to be proclaimed by those who intrigued the most against it, but by Prussia and her King in person.

Meantime it could not but be admitted that during the past six weeks of the new year Gagern's party worked seriously, perseveringly and not without parliamentary skill to bring the Constitution under shelter, even against the strongest minorities. A long-wanted stricter discipline had nevertheless at length been established by the necessities of the day amongst the patriotic functions of Parliament. Nor could it be prevented that a number of determinations were taken up in the work of the constitution which would not have appeared acceptable even to a Prince much more liberal personally than Frederick William IV, yet, in the end, the hereditary Empire had really been established by a very small majority, as well as the election of the King of Prussia.

For my part I had not waited for the result before doing all I could to urge the King into a course of conduct which would be the only remedy for Germany. As soon as I was certain that the committee for the Constitution had come to

a determination with regard to the Imperial question, I addressed the following letter to King Frederick William IV:

'*Gotha*, 14*th January* 1849.

'MOST ILLUSTRIOUS, MOST HIGH AND MIGHTY KING! MOST HIGHLY HONOURED SOVEREIGN COUSIN,—The committee for the Constitution of the German National Assembly in Frankfort-on-the-Main has decided in a majority that an Emperor shall be placed at the head of the German Empire.

'Only in this way can Germany attain greater unity, by means of which her elevation to higher political importance externally and the prospering of real freedom internally is certain.

'I therefore hope that the future decision of the National Assembly will join in this determination, but that the fate of Germany will be placed in the hands of a Prince who possesses will and strength thoroughly to fulfil his high calling.

'Your Majesty is henceforth intended by divine Providence to lead the German Fatherland to a happier future. Your Majesty will therefore have no hesitation in obeying the call to fill this high position, as soon as it has reached Your Majesty.

'I am expressing a wish which is certainly equally entertained by the majority of the Princes of Germany, and do not delay particularly to lay at the feet of Your Majesty the declaration that I shall be pleased to see Your Majesty at the head of Germany.

'I beg Your Majesty to accept the assurance of my distinguished regard and devotion, and remain,—Your Majesty's obedient friend, cousin, and servant,

'ERNEST, D. of S. C. and G.

'*Von Stein. To His Majesty the King of Prussia.*'

In Berlin the greatest value had always been placed on the accomplishment of the election of the German Emperor by the unanimous vote of the princes; my cordial letter would at least have served to be taken as a symptom that there were really princes in Germany, who were decided on following with me the path indicated; but in Berlin they

passed over such utterances, or at most vouchsafed a negative answer, the reasons for which were invariably the same, and which are expressed in the now well-known letter of Frederick William concerning the Imperial question. The only proper means of summoning a Congress of Princes was not brought under consideration in it.

Whilst in Frankfort the parliamentary battle over the Constitution and the hereditary Empire thrust everything else into the background, in Berlin the actions of the different parties on diplomatic ground became more and more passionate. It was as if Heaven and Hell should strive for the soul of the irresolute King. Whereas, on the one hand, those faithful to the Empire, a kind of idealistic diplomatist, the Gagerns, Stockmars, Bunsens, Dahlmanns, made the utmost endeavours to draw Frederick William IV over to the German course, three elements united, in order to free the King from the snare of what was already being called the Revolution: Foreign diplomacy, a German-Austrian Court coalition, and Prussian particularism.

In order not to succumb to this threefold attack, Camphausen in Frankfort tried to win the plenipotentiaries of all the individual Governments over to assuming a certain attitude and position before the second reading of the bill for the Imperial Constitution. Gagern and the constitutional party put off the consultation and decision of the Parliament until the necessary instructions for the plenipotentiaries of the individual States had arrived. The latter strove in every way to obtain the information asked of them.

During the first two weeks in February conferences concerning the bill for the Constitution, took place in the Council of Confederate envoys under Camphausen's presidency. Unfortunately, however, a number of the plenipotentiaries in Frankfort could not be induced to take part in these independent transactions. Thus Welcker and Wydenbrugk for Baden and Weimar, because they were under all circumstances hostile to Prussia, and the Altenburg Republican Krutziger, and as regarded the Saxon envoy Kohlschütter, he had orders from his Government to keep aloof.

Austria negotiated directly with Hanover, in order to nip the work of the Constitution in the bud, and Herr von

Schmerling, who, since his retirement from the Ministry, performed the functions of Austrian plenipotentiary, raised a project according to which the entrance of the German provinces belonging to Austria into a closer Confederate State was to be agreed upon, if, on the other hand, they declared themselves willing to admit a directory of six votes, those of the Emperor and the five Kings. In return for this the most complete possible acknowledgment of their natural rights, and, after a time, the entrance into the tolls-union was promised.

Of course these Austrian proposals were only calculated to win back Bavaria, Hanover and Saxony all the more surely from the idea of the Prussian Head, and in the Middle States everything had accordingly been done in order to arouse opposition against Prussia. The most had been done in Bavaria towards this, where the Ultramontanes raised their heads with a prophetic look into the future of the coming years. But in Saxony also they preferred to let the Republican creed thrive and grow, because they saw in it a means against the pretended intentions of Prussia.

In reality these intentions did not exist at all, for in Berlin they allowed themselves, it is true, to be pushed and urged, but they regarded their immediate task as being nothing else than the putting down of the revolution, wherever and however it should show itself. The King expressed these ideas in all kinds of the most polite forms, to the various envoys of the Frankfort Parliament, and to Gagern himself, but secretly he desired and hoped nothing else than that the National Assembly would play its part out as soon as possible, and make a quick end of the Frankfort episode.

In order to effectuate this, they left everything, in Berlin, with the greatest confidence, and according to the old method, to their dear confederate Austria and her Administrator of the Empire, who could not have been more fitted than he was to wait phlegmatically in order to gain his end, whilst appearing to be very busy. The Archduke, as everyone knows, really was able so to arrange matters, that he let every conceivable evil be heaped upon him until the end of June in Frankfort, solely so as not to give up the last post. With praiseworthy resignation he saw the work, with which his

good name was again connected, completely ruined, and finally become an object of derision.

But the King of Prussia himself was not to play his double part in the Frankfort Imperial dream without being punished for it. Severe humiliation lay without doubt in the lamentable way in which his election was laboriously brought about by his party in Frankfort, and in the really painful situation in which he found himself forced to refuse an offered crown of the most imaginary kind, with the appearance of feeling himself flattered thereby.

I am well aware that the customary manner of comprehending and describing these things is a very different one; vanity and a desire to dispute have almost entirely concealed the fact in history, that the Empire was finally carried by a majority of four votes in the National Assembly. They forgot, or tried to forget, that at the election of Frederick William IV not much more than a third of that proud Assembly which had met a year before, and in which the rights of Princes were more than once declared to be an empty trifle, had taken part in the voting. That it is still possible in books of history to spread the opinion that a less powerful Prince would have been pleased to accept this rump Empire from such hands is one of the tokens of small political insight.

In reality Frederick William IV could have no other feeling concerning the results of the long pains in labour of the Frankfort Empire, than one of heavy defeat. Added to this, not the least thing had been done by the Prussian Government during the three months which had elapsed since the Constitutional Committee had finished their work, in order to obtain a consent, such as I had thought it right to give the King, for my small part, on the 14th of January, without being asked. The result of the whole action could be none other than the refusal of the Empire by Frederick William IV.

My brother, who was really not wanting in seriousness, as far as regarded the German question, to which he had so often devoted much reflection, nevertheless could not help making the jesting remark:

'What is now to become of the poor nation, as the King

of Prussia has thrown the Emperor of the Germans into the water, just when he was trying to stand on his feet?'

When the last act of the Frankfort Imperial tragedy was played at the end of March, and the refusal followed on the 3rd of April, I was in Schleswig-Holstein, and had had my wish to take the field, away from the misery of politics, fulfilled. In the next chapter I will relate these matters connectedly, but at present I shall only bring up a few principal points to complete the whole of what may be said concerning the development of German affairs in general.

Even after, and in spite of Prussia's refusal, the question of the acceptance of the Constitution worked out by the National Assembly was not to be settled as regarded the individual Governments. The Central Power supplied the plenipotentiaries of the Governments with authentic copies of the Imperial Constitution decided upon; whether it was to be recognised in the individual lands, and proclaimed, was a point which would have to be immediately decided.

In a conference between the Imperial Ministry and the Chargés d'Affaires of the individual lands on the 14th of April, the declaration was made in Frankfort that the Central Power henceforth regarded it as their task to show the value of the Imperial Constitution and carrying into execution. Upon this Schmerling arose in his quality of Austrian plenipotentiary, in the name of his Government, with the communication that Austria did not admit the final value of the Constitution, but now, as before, insisted upon her views of union.

The hereditary Imperialists answered that they were just about to formulate an answer to the refusal of the Imperial Crown, and were therefore still on a business footing with Prussia.

The further consequences were, that the Austrian envoys in Frankfort were recalled by their respective Governments. The Governments of the middle States, on the contrary, adopted a temporising policy. In Bavaria, the painfully formed Ministry under Pfordten had begun written negotiations concerning the acceptance of the Imperial Constitution, and critically settled the acceptable and unacceptable conditions of the Imperial Constitution in extensive documents.

As these examinations were made on both sides with great

German thoroughness, one may say, that in the thirty-six States of Germany an amount of written material was heaped up over this Constitution which never saw the light, the ordering of which will probably never be arrived at by the pen of any author. As regarded my Government, it simply accepted the Imperial Constitution.

In Saxony, Baden and the Palatine, the republican and anarchical elements had made a last effort to organise a revolt against the authorities of the land, under the apparently lawful flag of the Frankfort Constitution. The battle against the revolution once more gave the Prussian State a favourable opportunity of attempting to preserve the legitimate ideas of her unity by ensuring the safety of Germany.

The only possible way which offered itself was to step with strong hand into the place of the ever more and more sinking Central Power. But the King avoided this very thing in the most decided manner, although the Administrator of the Empire assumed a more and more hostile attitude towards Prussia, and at length the last consideration for the Prussian Government was cast aside through the setting aside of Gagern's Ministry.

A comical farce came near being played at the instalment of the Grävell-Jochmus Ministry, concerning which I received news which I should like to see preserved by posterity as characteristic of the present state of things in Frankfort.

It must first be mentioned that in Prussia, on the 15th of May, an edict of the King was promulgated, according to which the Prussian envoys in Frankfort had their mandates withdrawn, and that at the same time the opinion was held in Berlin, that the Archduke would lay the office of Administrator of the Empire in the hands of the King of Prussia, as information was then really being sent from Frankfort that the Archduke was already prepared for the journey. But at the last moment these plans of the Administrator of the Empire were altered, and the session of the National Assembly of the 16th of May offered a picture of a situation which could never be forgotten:

'The recall of the Prussian Deputies was announced. The reply of the latter, as well as of the entire National Assembly —all against two voices—was, that no government had the

right to recall representatives. The Prussian Deputies particularly explained, besides, that they would only go if, in accordance with their views, the Assembly further forsook the legal way of carrying out the Constitution. Deputy Grävell announced his retirement in writing. After a while he nevertheless appeared in person, and then on the *Ministers' bench.* He was received with scornful laughter from every side, and some voices were heard calling "out!" Warned by good friends, he really preferred to leave, as he had retired as a Deputy, and was not yet introduced as a Minister. After such an unfortunate beginning of the President of the Imperial Ministry, it may be necessary to say something about him as a person.

'Grävell, Prussian Deputy, a man with a crimson face and snow-white hair, but not, it appears, whitened by age, is the only member of the National Assembly who rivals Moritz Mohl in ridiculousness. Partly on account of his comical ways, partly on account of the meaningless proposals brought forward by him during the past year, he has hardly ever mounted the tribune without being laughed at, he even usually laughs at himself. This man, otherwise what is known as an honest man, has been found fit by the Archduke to fill the offices of President of the Ministry and Minister of the Interior. When the news was spread the day before yesterday and yesterday everyone looked upon it as a bad joke, but it was true, soon after his unlucky retirement Grävell returned and handed the President a letter.

'Upon this the President read out his official nomination. The new President mounted the tribune amidst a perfect storm of shouts. But only after many and continued calls of "order" could the uproar be stopped, when he named his colleagues: Detmold, the small thoroughly German advocate of the Directory of the Extreme Right, Minister of Justice.—Mar, an unimportant Hamburger, Minister of Commerce; a War Minister not yet to be named on account of a condition made with him; (Prince Wittgenstein. General from Darmstadt, where, it is said, he had to retire), and as the best of all, Jochmus, formerly a Hamburger clerk, then a Turkish general, also a Pasha with two horsetails, of unknown life and doubtful faith, German Imperial Minister for Foreign Affairs.

'The indignation raised by such a farce and such mockery flung into the face of the nation, is *universal* amongst all parties, but it is greatest, if I may believe certain signs, on the part of the Prussian plenipotentiaries—(that is, the Government authorities which side with Prussia).

'To-day at four o'clock the Ministry will lay down a programme which is formed on the lines, that the Central Power will not worry itself about the work of the Constitution, and hopes that the National Assembly will not interfere with the Administration. That a vote of mistrust will follow this is certain, but it is also not improbable that the Administrator of the Empire will be deposed.

'Regarding this latter event, the Committee of Thirty has already sent in a notice of the installation of an Imperial Regency of five members, and formally proposed it.'*

The gradual dissolution of the National Assembly and the journey of the remnant to Stuttgart, the declaration of the Administratior of the Empire that this Assembly was unlawful, its insane decisions and proclamations, and its final and thorough military measures, are all either fresh in the reader's recollection, or known from countless descriptions, which offer, it is true, as a rule, a confused picture of the hopelessness and

* One of the most charming characteristics which Minister Grävell displayed to all the world concerning himself and his Archducal master, has almost fallen into oblivion. Under the title 'My Confession of Faith, regarding the political State of Germany,' he had a Memoir printed after his entrance into the Ministry, which he had handed the Administrator of the Empire as his programme, and which, as he said, decided the latter to choose him for a Minister. The exceedingly ridiculous nonsense which this document contains, and concerning which Herr Grävell assures the public 'that it is the best justification of his appointment,' can probably be found in numbers in different libraries. Grävell's circular note is less well-known, that in which he informed the Government of his wretched so-called programme. It is of the 20th of May, and runs as follows: 'It is my deep conviction that the intellectual activity of the German nation has received an impression which is indelible, and against which every other force will strive in vain. This is the frank opinion of a Power which not only demands respect, but with which only the presumptuous will neglect to establish friendly relations.

'Every force depends upon what direction it takes, and the direction of the determinations of men and peoples is either decided by reason, or by the sensual appetitive faculty. The more reflection, enlightenment of ideas, and clearness of insight increase, the more influence and strength must reason win over public opinion and the strength of will which it governs.

'These observations have made it appear essentially useful to me to circulate the accompanying document throughout all parts of Germany, as it is at the same time a fact and an appeal to German understanding. I enclose eighty copies of it, with the humble request that you will hand one to your sovereigns, and send the remainder to your Governments to be distributed,—The Imperial Minister of the Interior,

'DR GRÄVELL.

'*To the Plenipotentiaries at the Provisory Central Power.*
'*The Honourable Minister of State, Baron von Stein.*'

defeat of its contemporaries. For that the national effort to establish unity would come to so ignominious an end, was even more than the worst pessimist had expected.

Not less depressing, however, was the part which the Administrator of the Empire played out to the end in Frankfort. All Prussia's diplomatic attempts by means of Conferences between the plenipotentiaries of the twenty-nine States which had expressed themselves in favour of the Imperial Constitution, to obtain positive conclusions and the leadership of the affairs of the Empire, were defeated by the calculations of the Administrator of the Empire, who had been cleverly prompted by the Austrian Cabinet under no circumstances to give up his post. In order, therefore, to prevent the occurrence of a gap in the executive power of the Empire, the Archduke behaved in a remarkable manner, even officially clothing his departure from Frankfort, which might really rather be compared to an escape, in the form of a journey to a bath, and pretending to the plenipotentiaries of the States that he was thinking of unweariedly carrying on the government of the Empire, as he was taking his Jochmus Ministry with him, and would keep it near his person.

When the Darmstadt plenipotentiary Eigenbrodt, who had been ordered to Berlin by his Government, took leave of the Archduke on the 25th of June, the latter said, 'he would go to a bathing place for six weeks, and take General Jochmus with him, as he hoped that during this time Austria would have mastered Italy and Hungary, and Prussia would then assume a different tone.'

The recall of the Prussian plenipotentiary, and his explanation that his Government no longer recognised the Central Power, in no way altered the comedy played by the Archduke in obedience to orders from Vienna, as may be imagined. When he left Frankfort on the 30th of June with his Minister Jochmus, unnoticed, the latter issued the following circular note to all the plenipotentiaries of the German States at the Central Power, which became known at that time, indeed, but which must not be absent from any description of the characteristics of the desperate policy of those times:

'His Imperial Highness the Archduke, Administrator of

the Empire has decided that the undersigned Imperial Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Marine shall accompany His Imperial Highness during his absence from Frankfort to the Baths of Gastein, and has accordingly, by a decree issued to-day, entrusted the Honourable President of the Imperial Ministry Prince of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg with the control of the affairs of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Marine.

'The undersigned while informing all the Honourable Plenipotentiaries of the above, cannot refrain from expressing his regret at the discontinuance of the friendly relations which have hitherto existed during the short time of his official activity, and at the same time expressing the pleasant hope that after his return in the course of time to his post, such relations will again be established.—The Imperial Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Marine,

'JOCHMUS.

'*Frankfort, 29th June* 1849.'

Thus forsaken, and, to an extent, betrayed, the German nation saw the hopes fall which had been nourished during thirty years, and which appeared to fulfil the deceptive beginning of the year 1848. It was, as Dahlmann expressed it, a 'shipwreck in the bay.' No wonder, then, that under these circumstances the better spirit of the nation was compromised by the May Revolution of the year 1849, and that the anarchical and deserting elements of the Baden, Palatine, and Saxon rebels chose a legitimate sign-board for their blameable intentions.

One saw people, who had otherwise been faithful to their patriotic duties and obligations, fall into deep political errors. The statistics showed an exorbitant increase of cases of madness in every part of Germany, and society appeared to be entangling itself to the same degree in a labyrinth of reactionary fits and paroxysms, by which it was held in feverish dreams of downfall.

As I was, at that time, somewhat more conspicuously in popularity through my share in the popular Schleswig-Holstein war, I had more than one opportunity of perceiving the disturbances in the political conscience of otherwise quiet

and good men. I have retained almost tragi-comical recollections of the numerous invitations and importunities for me to place myself at the head of a great national uprising.

A letter of this kind from a well known man, written to me in May 1849, was perhaps more significant of the political situation at that time, than all the articles supplied to public newspapers. Therefore, the amusing document, but without the name of the author, shall close the Frankfort tragedy in not too serious a manner. As the man describes himself in his letter as having an affection of the liver, no one will be very much surprised if, in the oak forests of Kissingen, perhaps in romantic remembrance of the times when the Franconian peasantry wished to form the Empire which was to last a thousand years, or the nobility revolted against the faithless Princes, he thought of me as the leader of a great national army, who was once more to do honour to the crown of Charles the Great.

'*Kissingen*, 11*th May* 1849.

'MOST ILLUSTRIOUS DUKE! MOST ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE AND SOVEREIGN,—Whilst Your Highness is fighting devotedly for the German cause in Schleswig-Holstein, and holding it against an insolent foe, it has been betrayed and forsaken by those to whom the Germans looked as being those whose power and position seemed to have called them to obtain the victory. Your Highness knows the declarations made by the King of Prussia and the Kings of Bavaria, Hanover and Saxony who go with him, and Your Highness is aware of the indignation of the German people at that declaration, as well as of their enthusiasm for the Imperial Constitution, of the events in Stuttgart and Dresden, and of the conduct and uprising of the people, that is, in the Bavarian Rhineland, in the three Franconias, in the Prussian Rhineland, Westphalia and Hanover.

'No thoughtful man is any longer doubtful that the German cause will win; the only question is, whether this victory will cost a thousand—or, as the King's attitude will decree—a hundred thousand human lives, perhaps the noblest, the best; whether this victory will be gained in a few months, or in ten years, whether it will be fought on the ground of

rights or in the bloody revolution, with the overthrow of everything now existing, with the destruction of prosperity and the education of Germany for a long time.

'In this terrifying position Germany is looking for a deliverer, and this deliverer is no other than yourself, Highness; not I say this, all the voices in Germany are uttering the same more or less loudly. All thinkers—their number is great, who recoil from the betrayal of the German cause, as before the horror-inspiring red Republic, are saying that deliverance is only to be found if a German prince will place himself at the head of the movement for the establishment and carrying out of the Imperial Constitution; that no other Prince has the German sentiments, the sacrifice of the German cause, the heroic courage, the great-heartedness necessary for this, than yourself, Highness, the victor of Eckernförde; that no other Prince than you, the branch of a highly celebrated princely race, who is plainly called to lead the fate of the nations of Europe, can accomplish this heroic work, that, if Your Highness would appear with a troop of German warriors, with a call to the German people, to gather around you for the Imperial Constitution, for the German cause, all those capable of carrying arms in every different people would hasten to you, so that in a short time you would be the master of a power which would at once gain the victory for the German cause, which would put an end to the destructive internecine war in a moment, perhaps even without a single blow; that the love, the veneration, the thanks of a great nation would be given you, and history would rank you amongst the first and noblest heroes.

'It may well appear presumptuous in me to interfere in matters which I am not called upon to undertake; but love for my people, which I see on the verge of a frightful abyss, the certainty that Your Highness is fitted for it through your high position and your heroism, makes it my duty to express to Your Highness with what confidence, with what hopes, the German nation looks to you; the conviction that I am addressing a great-hearted Prince, whom I saw part from us glowing with enthusiasm for the German cause, that I speak to my Prince, whom I am happy really to love and honour,

as driven me to take this step, even with the possibility of loing something improper.

'Your Highness will be the deliverer of your people. 'erhaps, for God is with the just cause, you will be that in a ew days.

'I am writing this from Kissingen, where I have been taying for some weeks past in order to take the waters for a ad liver complaint, and where I daily have an opportunity f learning that the hearts of almost all German peoples eat for Your Highness.—With the deepest respect, Your Highness's, etc.'

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